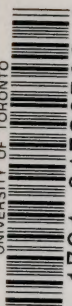



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THE
PRACTICAL WORKS

OF THE
REV. RICHARD BAXTER.

THE

PRACTICAL WORKS

OF

THE REV. RICHARD BAXTER:

WITH

A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

AND

A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF HIS WRITINGS,

BY THE

REV. WILLIAM ORME,

AUTHOR OF "THE LIFE OF JOHN OWEN, D.D.;" "BIBLIOTHECA BIBLICA," ETC.

IN TWENTY-THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. XXII.

LONDON:

JAMES DUNCAN, 37, PATERNOSTER ROW.

MDCCCXXX.

THE



THE REV. RICHARD BAXTER:

948 p
27/11/90

A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR

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PRINTED BY MILLS, JOWETT, AND MILLS,

BOLT-COURT, FLEET-STREET.

REV. WILLIAM ORME

ALSO IN THE LIST OF JOHN ORME, D.D., "HISTORICAL SKETCHES," &c.

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SHIPPERS

THE
PRACTICAL WORKS
OF THE
REV. RICHARD BAXTER.

VOLUME XXII.

CONTAINING
THE SAINT'S EVERLASTING REST.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY MILLS, JOWETT, AND MILLS,
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TO
MY DEARLY BELOVED FRIENDS,
THE INHABITANTS OF THE
BOROUGH AND FOREIGN OF KIDDERMINSTER,
BOTH MAGISTRATES AND PEOPLE.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

IF either I or my labours have any thing of public use or worth, it is wholly, though not only, yours; and I am convinced, by Providence, that it is the will of God it should be so. This I clearly discerned in my first coming to you, in my former abode with you, and in the time of my forced absence from you. When I was separated by the miseries of the late unhappy war, I durst not fix in any other congregation; but lived in a military, unpleasing state, lest I should forestall my return to you, for whom I took myself reserved. The offers of greater worldly accommodations, with five times the means which I receive with you, was no temptation to me once to question whether I should leave you: your free invitation of my return, your obedience to my doctrine, the strong affection which I have yet towards you above all people, and the general, hearty return of love which I find from you, do all persuade me that I was sent into this world especially for the service of your souls. And that even when I am dead I might yet be a help to your salvation, the Lord hath forced me, quite beside my own resolution, to write this treatise, and leave it in your hands. It was far from my thoughts ever to have become thus public, and burthened the world with any writings of mine; therefore have I oft resisted the requests of my reverend brethren, and some superiors, who might else have commanded much more at my hands: but see how God overruleth and crosseth our resolutions.

Being in my quarters, far from home, cast into extreme languishing by the sudden loss of about a gallon of blood, after many years' foregoing weaknesses, and having no acquaintance

about me, nor any books but my bible, and living in continual expectation of death, I bent my thoughts on my 'Everlasting Rest;' and because my memory, through extreme weakness, was imperfect, I took my pen and began to draw up my own funeral sermon, or some helps for my own meditations of heaven, to sweeten both the rest of my life and my death. In this condition God was pleased to continue me about five months, from home; where, being able for nothing else, I went on with this work, which so lengthened to this which here you see. It is no wonder, therefore, if I be too abrupt in the beginning, seeing I then intended but the length of a sermon or two; much less may you wonder if the whole be very imperfect, seeing it was written, as it were, with one foot in the grave, by a man that was betwixt living and dead, that wanted strength of nature to quicken invention or affection, and had no book but his bible while the chief part was finished, nor had any mind of human ornaments if he had been furnished. But O how sweet is this Providence now to my review, which so happily forced me to that work of meditation which I had formerly found so profitable to my soul, and showed me more mercy in depriving me of other helps than I was aware of, and hath caused my thoughts to feed on this heavenly subject, which hath more benefited me than all the studies of my life!

And now, dear friends, such as it is I here offer it you; and upon the bended knees of my soul I offer up my thanks to the merciful God who hath fetched up both me and it, as from the grave, for your service; who reversed the sentence of present death, which, by the ablest physicians, was passed upon me; who interrupted my public labours for a time, that he might force me to do you a more lasting service, which, else, I had never been like to have attempted: that God do I heartily bless and magnify, who hath rescued me from the many dangers of four years' war, and after so many tedious nights and days, and so many doleful sights and tidings, hath returned me, and many of yourselves, and reprieved us till now to serve him in peace; and though men be ungrateful, and my body ruined beyond hope of recovery, yet he hath made up all in the comforts I have in you. To the God of mercy do I here offer my most hearty thanks, and pay the vows of acknowledgment which I oft made in my distress, who hath not rejected my prayers, which in my dolor I put up,^a but hath, by a wonder, delivered me in the

^a Arriba Concil. de Gratia et Liber Arbit. l. i. c. 10.

midst of my duties ; and hath supported me this fourteen years in a languishing state, wherein I have scarcely had a waking hour free from pain ; who hath, above twenty several times, delivered me when I was near to death : and though he hath made me spend my days in groans and tears, and in a constant expectation of my change, yet hath he not wholly disabled me to his service ; and hereby hath more effectually subdued my pride, and made this world contemptible to me, and forced my dull heart to more importunate requests, and occasioned more rare discoveries of his mercy than ever I could have expected in a prosperous state. For ever blessed be the Lord, that hath not only honoured me to be a minister of his Gospel, but hath also set me over a people so willing to obey, and given me that success of my labours which he hath denied to many more able and faithful ;^b who hath kept you in the zealous practice of godliness when so many grow negligent, or despise the ordinances of God ; who hath kept you stable in his truth, and saved you from the spirit of giddiness, levity, and apostasy, of this age ; who hath preserved you from those scandals, whereby others have so heinously wounded their profession, and hath given you to see the mischief of separation and divisions, and made you eminent for unity and peace when almost all the land is in a flame of contention, and so many that we thought godly are busily demolishing the church, and striving in a zealous ignorance against the Lord. Beloved, though few of you are rich or great in the world, yet for this riches of mercy towards you, I must say, ye are my glory, my crown, and my joy ; and for all these rare favours to myself and you, as I have oft promised to publish the praises of our Lord, so do I here set up this stone of remembrance, and write upon it, ‘ Glory to God in the highest :

^b Nam cum gaudere in hoc omnes fratres oportet, tum in gaudio communi major est episcopi portio. Ecclesiæ enim gloria præpositi gloria est. Quantum dolemus ex illis quos tempestas inimica prostravit ; tantum lætamur ex vobis, quos diabolus superare non potuit. Hortamur tamen per communem fidem, per pectoris nostri veram circa vos et simplicem charitatem ut adversarium prima hac congressione vicistis, gloriam vestram forti et perseveranti virtute teneatis. Adhuc in seculo sumus ; adhuc in acie constituti, de vita nostra quotidie dimicamus. Danda opera est, ut post hæc initia, ad incrementa quoque veniatur, et consummetur in vobis, quod jam rudimentis fœlicibus esse cœpistis. Parum adipisci aliquid potuisse : plus est quod adeptus es posse servare ; sicut et fides ipsa et nativitas salutaris, non accepta, sed custodita vivificat. Nec statim consecutio, sed consummatio hominem Deo servat, ut John v. 14. — *Cyprian, Epist. vii. ad Rogat., &c. p. (mihi) 19.*

hitherto hath the Lord helped us : my flesh and my heart failed, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.'

But have all these deliverances brought us to our rest? No; we are as far yet from it as we are from heaven. You are yet under oppression and troubles, and I am yet under consuming sickness; and feeling that I am likely to be among you but a little while, and that my pained body is hastening to the dust, I shall here leave you my best advice for your immortal souls, and bequeath you this counsel as the legacy of a dying man, that you may here read it and practise it when I am taken from you; and, I beseech you, receive it as from one that you know doth unfeignedly love you, and that regardeth no honours or happiness in this world in comparison with the welfare and salvation of your souls; yea, receive it from me as if I offered it you upon my knees, beseeching you, for your souls' sake, that you would not reject it, and beseeching the Lord to bless it to you; yea, as one that hath received authority from Christ to command you, I charge you in his name, as ever you will answer it, when we shall meet at judgment, and as you would not have me there be a witness against you, nor all my labours be charged against you to your condemnation, and the Lord Jesus, your Judge, to sentence you as rebellious, that you faithfully and constantly practise these ten directions:

1. Labour to be men of knowledge and sound understandings. A sound judgment is a most precious mercy, and much conduceth to the soundness of heart and life.^c A weak judgment is easily corrupted; and if it be once corrupt, the will and conversation will quickly follow. Your understandings are the inlet or entrance to the whole soul; and if you be weak there, your souls are like a garrison that hath open or ill-guarded gates; and if the enemy be once let in there, the whole city will quickly be his own. Ignorance is virtually every error, therefore let the bible be much in your hands and hearts: remember what I taught you on Deut. vi. 6, 7. Read much the writings of our old, solid divines, such as Perkins, Bolton, Dodd, Sibbs, especially Doctor Preston. You may read an able divine when you cannot hear one: especially, be sure you learn well the principles of religion. Begin with the 'Assemblies' Lesser Catechism,' and then read the greater; and, next, Master Balls', with the

^c Male autem vivitur, si de Deo non bene creditur.—*August. de Civit.* l. v. c. 10.

‘Exposition,’ and then Doctor Ames’ ‘Marrow of Divinity,’ now Englished, or Usher’s. If you see men fall on controversies before they understand these, never wonder if they are drowned in errors. I know your poverty and labours will not give you leave to read so much as others may do ; but yet a willing mind will find some time, if it be when they should sleep, and, especially, it will spend the Lord’s day wholly in these things. O be not ignorant of God in the midst of such light ! as if the matters of your salvation were less worth your study than your trading in the world.

2. Do the utmost you can to get a faithful minister when I am taken from you, and be sure you acknowledge him your teacher, overseer, and ruler ; (1 Thess. v. 12, 13 ; Acts xx. 28 ; Heb. xiii. 7, 17 ;) and learn of him, obey him, and submit to his doctrine, except he teach you any singular points, and then take the advice of other ministers in trying it. Expect not that he should humour you, and please your fancies, and say and do as you would have him ; that is not the way of God, for the people to rule themselves and their rulers. If he be unable to teach and guide you, do not choose him at first ; if he be able, be ruled by him, even in things that to you are doubtful, except it be clear that he would turn you from the truth ; if you know more than he, become preachers yourselves ; if you do not, then quarrel not when you should learn : especially, submit to his private over-sight, as well as public teaching. It is but the least part of a minister’s work which is done in the pulpit : Paul taught them, also, from house to house, day and night, with tears. (Acts xx. 20, 31.) To go daily from one house to another, and see how you live, and examine how you profit, and direct you in the duties of your families, and in your preparations for death, is the great work.^d Had not weakness confined me, and public labours forbidden me, I should judge myself heinously guilty in neglecting this. In the primitive times, every church of so many souls as this parish had many ministers, whereof the ablest speakers did preach most in public, and the rest did the more of the less public work, which some mistake for mere ruling elders.^e But now, sacrilege and covetousness will scarcely leave

^d Which since I have dealt in with comfortable success. See my ‘Reformed Pastor.’

^e Clemens Alexand. saith, “ In all bodies there are two ranks ; those that better them by superiority and governing, and those that serve, as parents and children, magistrates and subjects, &c. And so in the church, that part which bettereth it belongeth to the presbyters, and that which serveth to the deacons.” Here is no mention of any other office.—*Stromat.* lib. vii. *initio*.

maintenance for one in a church ; which is it that hath brought us to a loss in the nature of government.

3. Let all your knowledge turn into affection and practice ; keep open the passage between your heads and your hearts, that every truth may go to the quick. Spare not, for any pains, in working out your salvation ; take heed of loitering, when your souls lie at the stake ; favour not yourselves in any slothful distemper : laziness is the damnation of most that perish among us. God forbid you should be of the mad opinion of the world, that like not serving God so much, nor making so much ado to be saved : all these men will shortly be of another mind. Live now as you would wish you had done at death and judgment. Let no scorns dishearten you, no differences of opinion be an offence to you : God, and Scripture, and heaven, and the way thither, are still the same. It will do you no good to be of the right religion, if you be not zealous in the exercise of the duties of that religion. Read often the fifth and sixth chapters of the third part of this book.

4. Be sure you make conscience of the great duties that you are to perform in your families. Teach your children and servants the knowledge and fear of God ; do it early and late, in season and out of season. Pray with them daily and fervently ; remember Daniel's example, (Dan. vi.,) and the command. (1 Thess. v. 17.) Read the Scripture, and good books to them ; restrain them from sin ; keep not a servant that will not learn, and be ruled. Neighbours, I charge you, as you will shortly answer the contrary before the Lord your Judge, that there be never a family among you that shall neglect these great duties. If you cannot do what you should, yet do what you can ; especially, see that the Lord's day be wholly spent in these exercises. To spend it in idleness or sports, is to consecrate it to your flesh, and not to God, and far worse than to spend it in your trades.

5. Beware of extremes in the controverted points of religion. When you avoid one error, take heed you run not into another, especially if you be in the heat of disputation or passion. As I have showed you, I think, the true mean in the doctrine of justification and redemption, so I had intended to have writ a peculiar treatise with three columns, showing both extremes, and the truth in the middle, through the body of divinity, but God takes me off. Especially beware of these times : antinomianism comes from gross ignorance, and leads to gross wickedness. Socinians are scarce Christians : Arminianism is quite above

your reach, and, therefore, not fit for your study in most points. The middle way which Camero, Ludov. Crocius, Martinus, Amyraldus, Davenant, with all the divines of Britain and Breme, in the synod of Dort, go, I think is nearest the truth of any that I know who have written on those points of redemption and universal grace. And for the points of predestination, and the nature of the divine influx on the will in the working of grace, which are most hotly agitated, and where the heart of the controversy seems to lie; I think I had never yet the happiness to read, or speak with the man that himself understood them: and those, least, that are usually most confident. As for separation, the mischief of it lies not in the bare error of judgment, but in the unchristian and church-dissolving division and alienation which thence followeth; contrary to that humility and love which is the visible character of Christians, and to that oneness which is still in Scripture ascribed to the visible church. Alas, that pride and ignorance should have such power among believers, that men cannot be of several judgments in lesser points, but they must needs be also of several churches! God will make us value peace and union a little more, before we shall taste of the perfect everlasting peace and union: yea, before we shall see the blessing of union in the church. Wounding is a dividing; healing is a re-uniting. A building is of many stones or pieces orderly conjoined; a church is an aggregation of individuals; an association of believers. What then, is it to demolish, but to separate and disjoin? And what is it to dissolve churches, but to break their association; to reduce them to individuals; to cut them into shreds? As for the differences, in way of govern-

^f Doubtless, in Cyprian's time, every particular, completed church was guided and ruled by a society of presbyters, having all authority to teach; the chief of whom was chosen constant moderator and president, and called the bishop; and under these were the deacons: and both presbyters and president ordained by others of the same office, and chosen or accepted by the people. So that then there was no bishop over many churches, but only the president to many ministers in one church; nor did they once claim a power over the officers of another church: nor was there such a thing as a presbyter that was no church governor, but merely a teacher: nor such a thing, I think, as a presbyter that had no authority to teach: nor such a thing as a church ruled by the vote of the people. "*Salvo inter collegas pacis et concordiae vinculo (there is the chief use of synods) quædam propria quæ apud se semel sunt usurpata, quidam, retinent. Qua in re, nec nos vim cuiquam facimus, aut legem damus; cum habeat in ecclesiæ administratione voluntatis suæ arbitrium liberum unusquisque præpositas, rationem actus sui Domino redditurus.*" This was written to the Bishop of Rome—an undoubted testimony against his usurped power, by blessed Cyprian, in Epist. lxxii. p. 217,

ment between the moderate presbyterians, independents, episcopal, and erastian, I make no doubt but if men's spirits stood not at a greater distance than their principles, they would quickly be united. But of all the four sorts, there are some that run so high in their principles, that they run out of the hearing of peace or truth. Will God never put it into the hearts of rulers, to call together some of the most godly, learned, moderate, and peaceable of all four opinions (not too many), to agree upon a way of union and accommodation, and not to cease till they have brought it to this issue? To come as near together as they can possibly in their principles: and where they cannot, yet to unite as far as may be, in their practice, though on different principles; and where that cannot be, yet to agree on the most loving, peaceable course in the way of carrying on our different practices; that so, as Rup. Meldenius saith, we may have unity in things necessary, liberty in things unnecessary, and charity in all. The Lord persuade those who have power to this pacificatory enterprise without delay.

For anabaptism and antinomianism, I have written against them in two other books (^g and more shall do against the latter, if

(edit. Goulartii.) By the consent of a synod, yea, in the ordination of their church guides, though the people cannot call them alone, without the election and ordination of other church guides, who are fittest to judge of their abilities; yea, are the people also to judge of their lives, and no officer ordinarily to be put on them without their consent; if the same Cyprian, with a whole synod, were not mistaken. “*Plebs ipsa maxime habet potestatem vel eligendi dignos sacerdotes, vel indignos recusandi.*”—*Epist. lxxviii.* Read the rest; which testimony I add, to show I am far from running into extremes against independency: and if they will read Goulartius' notes, they shall see that they are more beholden to Geneva presbyterians than they are aware of: yea, Pamelius himself confesseth as much as I say. But let the people remember that they choose not ministers whom they must rule, but church guides and rulers, whom God hath frequently charged them to obey, as corporations choose magistrates to govern them, and not to be governed by them. Yet more plainly, Cyprian in initio Concil. Carthage to 87:—Bishops, he saith—“*Superest ut de hac re singuli quid sentiamus proferamus neminem judicantes, aut à jure communionis aliquem si diversum sincerit amoventes. Neque enim quisquam nostrum episcopum se esse episcoporum constituit, aut tyrannico terrore collegas ad obsequendi necessitatem adigit, cum habeat omnis episcopus pro licentia libertatis et potestatis suæ arbitrium proprium, tamque judicari ab alio non possit, quam nec ipse potest alterum judicare. Sed expectemus universi judicium Domini nostri Jesu Christi, qui unus et solus habet potestatem et proponendi nos in ecclesiæ suæ gubernatione, et de actu nostro judicandi.*” Can more be said against the pope, or any bishop of many churches, or any that claim a decisive judgment of doctrinal controversies? In ‘*Oper. Cypriani*,’ (edit. Pamel. et Goulart.) pp 443, 444.

^g Since done in my ‘Confession and Apology.’

God will). But my guilty friends are offended with me for what I have done. I dare not, therefore, be silent, as being the officer and ambassador of Christ, and not of men ; God spoke effectually against them by those wondrous monsters in New England. But wonders are overlooked where the heart is hardened, and God intends to get his justice a name. The fearful delusions that God hath formerly given them over to, and the horrid confusion which they have introduced where they have sprung, hath spoken fully against both these latter sects. The weeping eyes, the bleeding sides, the lacerated members, of these churches ; the reproached Gospel, the disappointed reformation, the hideous doctrines, and unheard-of wickedness that hath followed them ; the contemned ordinances, the reproached, slandered, and ejected ministers ; the weak that are scandalised, the professors apostatised, the wicked hardened, and the open enemies of the Gospel that now insult : all these do ascribe them more plainly to England than words can do, and cry loud in the ears of God and man. What will be the answer, time will show : but, from Rev. ii. 14—16, 20—22, &c., we may probably conjecture.

6. Above all, see that you be followers of peace and unity, both in the church, and among yourselves. Remember what I taught you on Heb. xii. 14. He that is not a son of peace, is not a son of God. All other sins destroy the church consequentially, but division and separation demolish it directly. Building the church is but an orderly joining of the materials ; and what then is disjoining, but pulling down ? Many doctrinal differences must be tolerated in a church. And why, but for unity and peace ? Therefore, disunion and separation is utterly intolerable. Believe not those to be the churches' friends that would cure and reform her, by cutting her throat. Those that say, no truth must be concealed for peace, have usually as little of the one as the other. Study Gal. ii. 2 ; Rom. xiv. 1, &c. ; Acts xxi. 24, 26 ; 1 Tim. i. 4, and vi. 4 ; Tit. iii. 8, 9. I hope, sad experience speaks this lesson to your very hearts, if I should say nothing. Do not your hearts bleed to look upon the state of England ; and to think how few towns or cities there be, where is any forwardness in religion, that are not cut into shreds, and crumbled as to dust, by separations and divisions ? To think what a wound we have hereby given to the very christian name. How we have hardened the ignorant, confirmed the doubting ; and are ourselves become the scorn of our enemies, and the grief of our friends ; and how many of our dearest, best

esteemed friends are fallen to notorious pride or impiety ; yea, some to be worse than open infidels ; these are pillars of salt, see that you remember them. You are yet eminent for your unity, steadfastness, and godliness ; hold fast that you have, that no man take your crown from you ; temptations are now come near your doors, yet many of you have gone through greater, and, therefore, I hope, will escape through these. Yet, lest your temptation should grow stronger, let me warn you, that though of your own selves men should arise speaking perverse things, to draw disciples after them ; (Acts xx. 30 ;) yea, though an angel from heaven should draw you to division, see that you follow him not. If there be erroneous practices in the church, keep yourselves innocent with moderation and peace ; do your best to reform them, and rather remove your dwellings, if you cannot live innocently, than rend the church. It must be no small error that must force a separation. Justin, a holy, learned martyr, (in ‘Dialog. cum Triphone,’) who was converted within thirty-one years of John’s death, and wrote his first Apology within fifty-one, (and therefore it is like he saw John’s days,) professeth, that if a Jew should keep the ceremonial law, so he did not persuade the Gentiles to it as necessary, yet if he acknowledge Christ, he judgeth that he may be saved ; and he would embrace him, and have communion with him, as a brother. And Paul would have him received that is weak in the faith, and not unchurch whole parishes of those that we know not, nor were ever brought to a just trial. You know I never conformed to the use of mystical, symbolical rites myself, but only to the determination of circumstantials necessary *in genere* : and yet, I ever loved a godly, peaceable conformist, better than a turbulent nonconformist. I yet differ from many in several things of considerable moment, &c.^h As my ‘Aphorisms of Justification,’

^h Of which I may say, as famous Camero : Etsi non spondebam fore ut omnibus arrideret, attamen nunquam veritus sum nequis piorum eo offenderetur, quasi is causam adversariorum juvaret. Nam nullus inde quicquam potuit exculpere, quod causæ quam agebam, obesset, et is sic institutus est, ut ubique sententiam adversarii non modo petat, sed feriat etiam et jugulet. Quod si quis eum parum aptum et concinnum judicet, ego quidem certe id neque iudignor, neque doleo, ut qui sciam probe, quam sit æquum et rationi consentaneum, ut sint in hoc genere libera hominum judicia. Tantum id peto (quod à bonis viris impetraturum me facile confido) ne hic obruar præjudiciis, neu me quis nisi admonitum et vi veritatis victum, neque cedentem tamen existimet damnandum. Utinam me sic vobis purgarim ! Quod si cui vestrum ullus adhuc hæret scrupulus, mihi rem fecerit et pergratam, et apprime utilem ; si mecum volet aperte agere, mihiqve vel agnoscendi errorem

show (as is explained in my 'Confession'). And yet if I should zealously press my judgment on others, so as to disturb the peace of the church, and separate from my brethren, that are contrary minded, I should fear lest I should prove a firebrand in hell, for being a firebrand in the church; and for all the interest I have in your judgment and affections, I here charge you, that if God should give me up to any factious, church-rending course, against which I daily pray, that you forsake me, and follow me not a step.

And for peace with one another, follow it with all your might; If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, live peaceably with all men. (Rom. xii. 18.) Mark this : when you feel any sparks of discontent in your breast, take them as kindled by the devil from hell, and take heed you cherish them not. If the flames begin to break forth in censoriousness, reproaches, and hard speeches of others, be as speedy and busy in quenching it, as if it were fire in the thatch of your houses : for why should your houses be dearer to you than the church, which is the house of God ? Or than your souls, which are the temples of the Holy Ghost ? If any heart-burnings arise, do not keep strange, but go together and lovingly debate it, or pray together, that God would reconcile you ; or refer the matter to your minister, or others ; and let not the sun go down on your wrath ; hath God spoken more against any sin than unpeaceableness ? If you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you, which made Ludovicus Crocius say, that this is the measure and essential property of the least degree of true faith. 'Syntag.' lib. iv. c. 16. If you love not each other, you are no disciples

ei, vel tuendæ atque illustrandæ veritatis copiam facere, prolatis rationibus ac testimoniis S. Scripturæ, quibus vel cedere, si contra me faciunt vel si minus, respondere queam.—*Camer. in Epist. Resp. ad Theol. Leidens. Oper. fol. p. 716, vel ut Augustin.* "Sicut lectorem meum nolo mihi esse deditum, ita correctorem nolo sibi. Ille me non amet amplius quam catholicam (fidem : iste se non amet amplius quam catholicam) veritatem. Sicut illi dico, noli meis literis quasi Scripturis Canonicis in servire ; sed in illis et quod non credebas, cum inveneris, incunctanter crede, in istis autem, quod certum non habebas, nisi certum intellexeris, noli firmiter retinere. Ita illi dico ; noli meas literas ex tua opinione vel contentione, sed ex divina lectione, vel inconcussa ratione corrigere. Si quid in eis veri comprehenderis, existendo non est meum : at intelligendo, et amando, et tuum sit, et meum. (Siquid autem falsi conviceris errando fuerit meum.) Sed jam cavendo nec tuum sit nec meum."—*Aug. Proem. l. 3. de Trin.* This is all I desire of the readers of my writings ; Hoc erga me omnes observare vellem, quod erga te ipse servavi ; ut quicquid improbandum putant in scriptis meis, nec claudant subdolo pectore, nec ita reprehendant apud alios, ut taceant apud me.—*Aug. Epist. ad Hieron. inter opera. Hieron. tom. iii. fol. 164. (edit. Amerbach.)*

of Christ; nay, if you love not your enemies, and bless not them that curse you, and pray not for them that hurt and persecute you, you are no children of God. The wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, &c. (Jam. iii. 17.) O remember that piercing example of Christ, who washed his disciples' feet, to teach us, that we must stoop as low to one another. Sure, God doth not jest with you in all these plain Scriptures. I charge you, in the name of Christ, if you cannot have peace otherwise, that you suffer wrongs and reproaches, that you go and beg peace of those that should beg it of you; yea, that you beg it on your knees of the poorest beggar, rather than lose it. And remember, Rom. xvi. 17, 18.

7. Above all, be sure you get down the pride of your hearts. Forget not all the sermons I preached to you against this sin. No sin more natural, more common, or more deadly. A proud man is his own idol; only from pride cometh contention. There is no living in peace with a proud person; every disrespect will cast them into a fever of discontent. If once you grow wise in your own eyes, and love to be valued and preferred, and love those best who think highest of you, and have secret heart-risings against any that disregard you, or have a low esteem of you, and cannot endure to be slighted, or spoke evil of; never take yourselves for Christians, if this be your case. To be a true Christian without humility, is as hard, as to be a man without a soul. O, poor England, how low art thou brought by the pride of ignorant zealots! Dear friends, I can foretell you, without the gift of prophecy, that if any among you do fall from the truth, mark which is the proudest, that cannot endure to be contradicted, and that vilify others, and those will likely be they; and if ever you be broken in pieces, and ruined, pride will be the cause.

8. Be sure you keep the mastery over your flesh and senses. Few ever fall from God, but flesh-pleasing is the cause; many think that by "flesh" the Scripture means our in-dwelling sin, when, alas! it is the inordinate, sensitive appetite that it chargeth us to subdue. Nothing in the world damneth so many as flesh-pleasing, while men generally choose it as their happiness instead of God. O remember who hath said, "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die," and, "Make no provision for the flesh, to satisfy its desires." (Rom. viii. 5—7, and xiii. 14.) Think of this when you are tempted to drunkenness, and gluttony, and lustfulness, and worldliness; and when you would fain have your dwellings

and states more delightful. You little think what a sin it is, even to please your flesh, further than it tends to help you in the service of God.¹

9. Make conscience of the great duty of reproving and exhorting those about you : make not your souls guilty of the oaths, ignorance, and ungodliness, of others, by your silence. Admonish them lovingly and modestly, but be sure you do it, and that seriously. This is the first step in discipline. Expect not that your minister should put any from the sacrament, whom you have not thus admonished once and again. Punish not before due process.

10. Lastly : be sure to maintain a constant delight in God, and a seriousness and spirituality in all his worship. Think it not enough to delight in duties, if you delight not in God. Judge not of your duties by the bulk and number, but by the sweetness. You are never stable Christians till you reach this. Never forget all those sermons I preached to you on Psalm xxxvii. 4. Give not way to a customary dulness in duty : do every duty with all thy might : especially, be not slight in secret prayer and meditation. Lay not out the chief of your zeal upon externals, and opinions, and the smaller things of religion. Let most of your daily work be upon your hearts : be still suspicious of them ; understand their mortal wickedness, and deceitfulness, and trust them not too far. Practise that great duty of daily watching : pray earnestly that you be not led into temptation. Fear the beginnings and appearances of sin. Beware lest conscience once lose its tenderness. Make up every breach between God and your conscience betime. Learn how to live the life of faith, and keep fresh the sense of the love of Christ, and of your continued need of his blood, Spirit, and intercession ; and how much you are beholden and engaged to him. Live in constant readiness and expectation of death, and be sure to get acquainted with this heavenly conversation which

¹ Fateor insitam esse nobis corporis nostri charitatem. Fateor nos hujus gerere tutelam. Nec nego indulgendum illi, serviendum nego. Multis enim serviet, qui corpori servit, qui pro illo nimium timet, qui ad illud omnino refert ; sic gerere nos debemus, non tanquam propter corpus vivere debeamus, sed tanquam non possimus sine corpore. Hujus nos nimius amor timoribus inquietat, solitudinibus onerat, contumeliis objicit. Honestum ei vile est, cui corpus nimium charum est. Agatur ejus diligentissima cura ; ita tamen ut cum exiget ratio, cum dignitas, cum fides, mittendum in ignem sit.—*Seneca Epist. xii.* p. 543. Happy were many a Christian if they had learned this lesson which an infidel teacheth them.

this book is written to direct you in ; which I commend to your use, hoping you will be at the pains to read it, as for your sakes I have been to write it ; and I shall beg for you of the Lord, while I live on this earth, that he would persuade your souls to this blessed work, and that when death comes, it may find you so employed, that I may see your faces with joy at the bar of Christ, and we may enter together into the everlasting rest. Amen.

Your most affectionate, though unworthy teacher,

RICHARD BAXTER.

Kidderminster, Jan. 15, 1649.

TO THE RIGHT WORSHIPFUL
SIR THOMAS ROUS, BARONET,
WITH THE
LADY JANE ROUS, HIS WIFE.

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL,

THIS first part of this treatise was written under your roof, and therefore I present it not to you as a gift, but as your own; not for your protection, but for your instruction and direction: for I never perceived you possessed with that evil spirit, which maketh men hear their teachers as their servants, to censure their doctrine, or be humoured by them rather than to learn. Nor do I intend this epistle for the publishing of your virtues: you know to whose judgment you stand or fall. It is a small thing to be judged by man's judgment: if you be sentenced as righteous at the bar of Christ, and called by him, the blessed of his Father, it matters not much by what name or title you are here called. All saints are low in their own esteem, and therefore thirst not to be highly esteemed by others. He that knows what pride hath done in the world, and is now doing, and how close that heinous sin doth cleave to all our natures, will scarcely take him for a friend who will bring fuel to the fire; nor that breath for amicable, which will blow the coal. Yet, he that took so kindly a woman's box of ointment, as to affix the history to his Gospel, that wherever it was read, that good work might be remembered, hath warranted me, by his example, to annex the mention of your favours to this treatise, which have many times far exceeded in cost, that which Judas thought too

good for his Lord. And common ingenuity commandeth me thankfully to acknowledge, that when you heard I was suddenly cast into extreme weakness, you sent into several counties to seek me in my quarters, and, missing of me, sent again to fetch me to your house, where for many months I found a hospital, a physician, a nurse, and real friends, and, which is more than all, daily and importunate prayers for my recovery : and since I went from you, your kindnesses still following me in abundance : and all this for a man that was a stranger to you, whom you had never seen before but to burden you ; and for one that had no witty insinuations for the extracting your favours, nor impudence enough to return them in flatteries ; yea, who had such obstructions between his heart and his tongue, that he could scarcely handsomely express the least part of his thankfulness, much less able to make you a requital. The best return I can make of your love is, in commending this heavenly duty to your practice ; wherein I must entreat you to be more diligent and unwearied, because as you may take more time for it than the poor can do, so have you far stronger temptations to divert you. It being extremely difficult for those that have fulness of all things here, to place their happiness really in another life, and so set their hearts there, as the place of their rest, which yet must be done by all that will be saved. Study Luke xii. 16—22, xvi. 19, 25 ; and Matt. xix. 23. How little comfort do all things in this world afford to a departing soul ! My constant prayer for you to God shall be, that all things below may be below him in your hearts, and that you may thoroughly master and mortify the desires of the flesh, and may live above in the Spirit, with the Father of spirits, till you arrive among the perfected spirits of the just.

Your much obliged servant,

RICHARD BAXTER.

A PREMONITION.

CONCERNING the alterations and additions in this second edition, I thought meet to give you this brief account, though I could have found in my heart to have supplied divers other defects through the book, especially in the beginning of the first and second part, where the effects of my weakness were most evident; yet, because the stationer persuaded me that it would be an offence to those that had bought the first edition, I forbear. Yet, because I knew no reason why any should deny me leave to correct or amend my own work, especially for once, I have made these necessary alterations and additions following.

1. I have corrected several passages (especially in the beginning of the first and second part) which I found to be most liable to exception, or misinterpretation: and more I had done, would my friends have been entreated to have informed me of what they disliked. Also, some passages I have more cleared, that were offensive, by touching on the late public quarrels, which I could have gladly blotted out to avoid distaste, if conscience would have given me leave: but he that will cast off all books which contain any thing disagreeing from his judgment, shall read or profit by few in the world. 2. I have added one chapter, (the ninth,) in the second part; which, being promised in the beginning, in the method propounded, was forgotten. Also, I have added the eleventh chapter in the third part, containing a more exact inquiry into the nature of sincerity, and the use of marks; which I judged of necessity, as being of so great concernment both to men's comforts and to their safety: and I hope none will think it needless curiosity. Also a preface, I have added to the second part, both for defence and fuller explication of the doctrine therein contained; wherein, also, I expect to be free from the censure of needless curiosity, with all those that know how much the peace and welfare of our souls depend on the right apprehension of the verity of the Scriptures. Lastly, I have added many marginal quotations, especially of the ancients; which, though some may conceive to be

useless, and others, to be merely for vain ostentation, yet I conceived useful, both for the sweetness of the matter, (concerning which I refer you to the perusal, to me it seemed so in the reading,) as also to free myself from the charge of singularity.

If any say, that I should have prevented this by all greater carefulness at the first, I answer, 1. That which is past cannot be recalled: it is well if it can be repented of and amended. 2. I wrote so much of it in so exceeding debility of body, that it was much wonder that my understanding was not utterly disabled. 3. And I was distant from home, where I had no book but my Bible, and therefore could not add the consent of authors. If you say, There was no such haste, but I might have stayed till I had been better able and furnished, I answer, 1. Little reason had I to expect to have survived till now, yea, or two months longer. 2. Who knows not how little we are masters of our own, that knows the interest of our friends, who are often importunate for that which others distaste; which, though it be a poor excuse for doing evil, yet may sometimes partly excuse the unseasonable doing of good. 3. I repent not my haste, though I do my imperfections: for God hath been pleased to give the book such unexpected acceptance, that I have reason enough to hope, that the good it hath done this one year, already, is greater than the hurt which the imperfections have done. 4. And I am so conscious of my own imperfections, that I know they will appear in all that I do, and, therefore, I doubt not but there is still that which deserves correction, and would be, if I were to amend it a hundred times. If great Austin so frequently and passionately confess so much by himself, who am I, that I should hope of better? So much of this second edition.

Concerning the book itself, let me advertise you, that the first and last part were all that I intended when I begun it, which I fitted merely to my own use; and, therefore, if you find some strains of self-application, you may excuse them. And for the second part, it fell from my pen besides my first intention, but was occasioned partly by assaults that I had often suffered in that point, and partly by my apprehensions of the exceeding necessity of it, and that to the main end which I intended in this book. Who will set his heart on the goodness of a thing, that is not certain of the truth, or part with his present delights till he is sure he may have better? And, because I have only in brief given you these reasons which most prevailed with

myself, having then no authors by me, I wish you would read Grotius, and the Lord Du Plessis "Of the Verity of Christian Religion," (especially chap. 25, 26, and last,) both which are translated into English.^a The third part I last added; the four first chapters, for the use of secure and sensual sinners, if any of them should happen to read this book: the three last, for the godly, to direct and comfort them in afflictions, and especially to persuade them to the great duty of helping to save their brethren's souls; the seven middle chapters, for the use both of the godly and the ungodly, as being of unspeakable concernment to all. So that all parts of this book are not fitted to the same persons.

Some, I hear, blame me for being so tedious, and say, All this might have been in a lesser room: such I would inform, that in thus doing, I have more crossed myself than them; having naturally such a style as, because of brevity, is accused of obscurity; and had much ado to bring myself to this which they blame; and did obey my reason in it, against my disposition. For, as I thought my views of this glory should not be short, nor my speeches too contracted, so I considered that I speak to plain, unlearned men, that cannot find our meaning in too narrow a room, and that use to overlook the fulness of significant words. As they must be long in thinking, so we must be long in speaking: or else our words fall short of the mark, and die before they can produce the desired effect, so great is the distance between these men's ears and their brains. Besides, I know I am to speak to men's affections, which yet lie deep, and far more remote. How guilty I am myself, let others judge; but surely I approve not tautologies, or a tedious style, or the heaping up of useless matter or words; nor can I choose but judge those Tostatuses impudently proud, who think the world should read nobody's works but theirs. Yet if the length of my discourse do but occasion the reader's longer thoughts on this so sweet and needful a subject, I shall scarcely repent of my reprehended tediousness. And I confess I never loved affectation, or too much industry about words, nor like the temper of them that do. May I speak pertinently, plainly, piercingly, and somewhat properly, I have enough. I judge, as judicious Dr. Stoughton, out of Seneca, that, "He is the best preacher that feels what

^a And since I have written a supplement, called 'The Unreasonableness of Infidelity.'

he speaks, and then speaks what he feels.” I confess, also, that I had made the first and fourth parts of this book much longer ; but that upon my return home, (to my books,) I found in Mr. Burrough’s ‘Moses’s Choice,’ and others, the same things already abroad which I intended. And had I been at home, when I begun this, or read so much on the like subjects as I have since done, I think I should have left out all or most that I have written ; yet do I not repent it ; for God, that compelled me to it, knows how to make use of it. If this apology satisfy not, I offer the plaintiff these three motions to take his choice : 1. Either let it alone, and then it will do you no harm : 2. Or if you will needs read it, blame the author, and spare him not, so you will but entertain the truth, and obey what you are convinced to be your duty : 3. Or set on the work and do it better, that God’s church may yet have more help in so needful a business. But no more of this. Were not the success of my labour more desirable to me than the maintenance of my esteem, I should think three lines long enough for apology.

But the chief thing which I intend, in this premonition, is, to acquaint each reader with the main design of this book, and to beseech him, for his soul’s sake, that he will use it accordingly. Though the right comforting of the soul is a matter of great moment in life and at death, and worth much more labour than I have here bestowed, yet the ends which I intended are of far greater weight. Though I have heard many pious men say, ‘Let us study how to come to heaven, and let others study how great the joys are,’ yet have I found, by reason and experience, as well as Scripture, that it is not our comfort only, but our stability, our liveliness in all duties, our enduring tribulation, our honouring of God, the vigour of our love, thankfulness, and all our graces ; yea, the very being of our religion, and Christianity itself, dependeth on the believing, serious thoughts of our rest. The end directeth to, and in, the means. It is the first thing intended, to which all the actions of our lives must aim : ^b mistake in this, and you are lost for ever, except you rectify your mistake in time. To know what is indeed your end and happiness, and heartily to take it so to be, is the very first stone in the foundation of religion : most souls that perish in the christian world, do perish for want of being sincere in this point. Men have learned in books, that God is

^b Gibeouf saith that nothing is desired properly at all, but the ultimate end.

the chief Good, and only the enjoyment of him in heaven will make us happy ; but their hearts do not unfeignedly take him to be so. Most men take the present contentments of the flesh, consisting in pleasures, profits, and honours, to be their happiness indeed. This hath their very hearts, while God hath the tongue and knee ; this is seriously sought after, while God is hypocritically complimented with ; heaven is heartlessly commended, while the world is eagerly pursued ; Christ is called Master, while this flesh bears all the sway : only because they cannot choose but know that the world will shortly leave them in the grave, and this flesh, which is so cherished, must lie rotting in the dust ; therefore, they will allow God the leavings of the world, and Christ shall have all that the flesh can spare ; so far they will be religious and godly, lest they should be thrust into hell ; and they look for heaven as a reserve, when they can keep their worldly happiness no longer. This is the self-deluding religion of thousands.

Reader, I pray God bring this close to thy heart, that it may awake thee to a godly jealousy, to see that thy heart deceive thee not in this one point. O, how many professors of zeal in religion, of much knowledge, and excellent tongues, and blameless conversations in other things, do yet so eagerly mind the world and the flesh, and subtly evade every danger, and distinguish themselves out of every duty that is very dear, or inconsistent with their worldly happiness, that it is most evident they never cordially took God for their portion and happiness ! When men lay not this foundation in sincerity, they may build all their lives to little purpose, and the fall will be great when this sand deceives them. When they take this first principle, but as a notion into the brain, and never lay it deep and close to the heart, all their lives after are spent in hypocrisy, and all their duties increase their delusion, except God call them back again to review their souls, and lay that foundation which before they had neglected. Therefore, is it said, that to be carnally minded is death, and if ye mind or live after the flesh, ye shall die ; and that the carnal mind is enmity to God ; and if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him ;^c and it is so hard for rich men to enter heaven ; and you can scarce find any saint in Scripture charged with covetousness, because it is as possible the devils should be saved,

^c Rom. viii. 5—8, 13 ; 1 John ii. 15. Vide excellent 'Epist. Colombani Herbin. de præsentis vitæ vanitate, miseria,' &c. in Usser. Armach. Veterum Epist. Hibern. Syllog.' pp. 7, .

as the man that finally takes up his chief rest and happiness in any thing below God. And what is the cause of all this mischief, but that men do not seriously and frequently think, first, of the certain truth, and then, of the sweet, inconceivable excellencies that wait for them, if they will renounce the vanities of the world, and cleave heartily to God in Jesus Christ? Besides, if men do not apprehend the excellency of this 'Rest,' they cannot value Christ, or his blood that purchased it, and therefore they cannot indeed be Christians; nor is it once knowing what heaven is that will serve the turn: if we have not a continual or frequent taste of it in our souls, we shall live in continual danger of being overcome. When temptations take you up into the mountain, and show you the kingdoms and glory of the world, and say, 'All this will I give thee;' if, then, you have not a greater and surer glory in your view, what danger are you in! O that the nefarious miscarriages of professors of piety in this age, did not witness it to our sorrow, and the shame of our profession! Not a day but the devil will be casting thee a bait; either sports, or mirth, or filthy lusts, or the pleasing of thy appetite in meats and drinks, or reputation, or rising in the world, or fears of men, or some such thing; and if thou have been newly in the consideration of thy rest with God, it will make thee trample upon them all; but if that be forgotten or undervalued, all is gone. Besides, what life and vigour will it maintain in all our duties? How earnestly will that man pray, that believingly and seriously apprehends what he prayeth for? How, also, will it fill the soul with love, when men do every day view the face of love itself, and warm their hearts in these heavenly contemplations? And if it were but to make our religion delightful to us, it would have greater use than the mere pleasure of that delight, as I have showed in the conclusion of the book: how cheerfully would men go on through labour and suffering, if once they had that delight in God which a heavenly life would afford. When life and joy, seriousness and sweetness, go together, it will make men profitable, victorious, and persevering Christians. In a word, you can neither live safely, profitably, piously, conscionably, or comfortably; nor die so, without believing serious considerations of your rest.

And now, reader, whatever thou art, young or old, rich or poor, I entreat thee, and charge thee, in the name of thy Lord, who will shortly call thee to a reckoning, and judge thee to thine everlasting, unchangeable state, that thou give not these

things the reading only, and so dismiss them with a bare approval; but that thou set upon this work, and take God in Christ for thy only rest, and set thy heart upon him above all. Jest not with God: do not only talk of heaven, but mind it, and seek it with all thy might; what greater business hast thou to do? Dally no longer, when thy salvation lies at the stake. O turn off the world before it turn thee off; forsake thy fleshly pleasures before they forsake thee; and thou find that God also hath forsaken thee. Wink at these withering beauties; and shut thy mouth against these pleasant poisons. Remember what they will all be to thee, when thy friends are weeping over thee, and looking for thy winding sheet; nay, when God shall say, Give account of thy stewardship, thou shalt be no longer steward: thou fool, this night shall they require thy soul; whose then shall these things be? Lord, how do men think so carelessly of that day, which they cannot choose but know is near, and will make so great a change with them! Surely (saith noble Du Plessis),^d if all the world were made for man, then man was made for more than the world. Harken, all you worldlings and flesh-pleasers, the God of heaven chargeth you, upon your allegiance, to change your pleasures. He offereth you delights beseeing men; yea, the joys of angels; and commandeth you to renounce the pleasures of sin, and delights that only beseeem a beast. Will you not take his offer? Take it now, lest he never offer it you more. He commandeth you, as ever you will see his face in glory to your comfort, that now you turn your thoughts seriously to him, and to that glory; dare you deny, or neglect to obey? If you will not part with your merriments and vanities for that which is infinitely better, be it now known to you, you shall shortly part with them for nothing; yea, for hell fire; and you shall leave them with groans and horror ere long, if you will not leave them for God and glory now. Spit out these venomous, fleshly pleasures, man; come near, and taste of the heavenly delights. What say you? will you resolve; will you covenant with God this day, and do it? Do I speak to a post, that cannot feel; or to a beast, that is incapable of heaven? Will you pass over my words, as if they concerned you not? The great God that put this doctrine into your bibles, and put this message into my mouth, and bid me speak it to thee in his name, will one day

^d Epist. before the 'Verity of Christian Religion.'

speaking to thee so rousingly himself, as will make thine ears to tingle, and that rocky heart of thine to tremble, in despite of all thy security and stupidity. If thou have now sinned away thy fear and feeling, that thou takest a sermon but for words of course, believe it, God will shortly bring thy fear and thy feeling again. It had need to be very precious liquor, which the drunkard shall then pay so dear for ; and excellent content which the lustful must so smart for ; and great honours and riches, for which thou must lose thy hopes of heaven. If thou hadst never heard or read of these things, there were the more excuse ; but if, when thou knowest of it, thou wilt needs run into the fire, into the fire shalt thou go : but when thou feelest the pain, thou shalt bethink thee of thy folly ; and when heaven is lost, remember thou mightest have had it, and that upon very reasonable, easy terms, if thou wouldst. Nothing but thy own wilfulness could have shut thee out. I have warned thee : let God do his will.

And for you that fear God, and have made him your portion, your end, and rest, and are the heirs of this kingdom, let me entreat you, more frequently to look homeward, and mind your inheritance. Should we not think oft of the state we must be in for ever ? Do you not perceive that God tumbles you up and down the world, and crosseth your desires, to weary you out of it ; that he setteth loose the winds to raise those storms, that may make you long for the harbour, and may toss you to his breast ; that he makes your dearest friends afflict you, and those that you took sweet counsel with, and went up with to the house of God as companions, to be scorpions to you, that so you might not have here a resting place for the sole of your foot ? O, learn God's gracious meaning, and look upwards ! When others are roving after opinions, and running from sect to sect, and, with contentions and vain janglings, are firing the church of Christ, do you then retire yourselves from these vanities to your God ; humbly converse with him ; and think, believingly, of your everlasting converse with him ; and thus fire your souls with his rays of love. For my own part, even when I am constrained (as teachers oft are more than the people) to study controversies, though they be necessary, and in themselves about precious truths, and though I prosper in my studies, yet do I find most sensibly that they discompose my spirit, and waste my zeal, my love, and delight in God, even by the interruption and diversion of my contemplations ; so that I long to have done with them,

that I may be more near to God. Disputings often lead to envyings and heart-burnings, and those to hating our brethren, and that to open violence and bloodshed, even of the saints, to persecutions of ministers, and setting ourselves against Christ's apparent interest for our own ; but heavenly meditations calm the spirit, and, by winning our souls to the love of God, do not only cause us to love our brethren, but to love them in God, which is the only right love. And thus all men shall know that you are Christ's true disciples, by your loving one another ; for he that loveth, dwelleth in God, and God in him. When they that hate their brethren are murderers ; and we know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.^e The living God, who is the portion and rest of his saints, make these, our carnal minds, so spiritual, and our earthly hearts so heavenly, that loving him and delighting in him may be the work of our lives ; and that neither I that write, nor you that read this book, may ever be turned from this path of life, lest a promise being left us of entering into rest, we should come short of it through our own unbelief or negligence.^f

May 17, 1651.

^e John xiii. 34, 35, and xv. 12 ; 1 John iii. 15, and ii. 9—11.

^f Heb. iv. 1.

THE SAINT'S EVERLASTING REST.

HEBREWS iv. 9.

There remaineth, therefore, a rest for the people of God.

CHAP. I.

SECT. I. It was not only our interest in God, and actual fruition of him, which was lost in Adam's covenant-breaking fall, but all spiritual knowledge of him, and true disposition towards such a felicity. Man hath now a heart too suitable to his estate: a low state, and a low spirit. And (as some expound that of Luke xviii. 8) when the Son of God comes with recovering grace, and discoveries and tenders of a spiritual and eternal happiness and glory, he finds not faith in man to believe it.^a But as the poor man that would not believe that any one had such a sum as a hundred pounds, (it was so far above what he possessed,) so man will hardly now believe that there is such a happiness as once he had, much less as Christ hath now procured. When God would give the Israelites his Sabbaths of rest in a land of rest, he had more ado to make them believe it, than to overcome their enemies and procure it for them; and when they had it, only as a small intimation and earnest of a more incomparably glorious rest through Christ, they stuck there; and will yet believe no more than they do possess, but sit down and

^a Recedentes enim ab unius et veri Dei consideratione affectuque in illum unico, in varias jam, et particulares corporis concupiscentias prolapsi sunt. Deinde ut solet fieri, cum in multa incidissent desideria, in eorum jam habitum sensim transiere: adeo ut deserere ipsa metuerent. Hinc jam et metus et voluptates in animam irrepserunt: mortaliaque sapere incepit. Nolens enim concupiscentias relinquere, mortem metuit, ac separationem corporis horruit. Rursus eadem cupiens ut voti compos fieret, cædes exercere, atque jura violare didicit. Abutens igitur infelix anima corporalibus particulatim actionibus, corporisque oblectata specie, ac voluptatem bonum suum esse arbitrans, falsa ac seducta honesti nomine abusa est: ipsumque verum bonum voluptatem esse putavit. Voluptatis igitur amore detenta, variis hæc modis operari cæpit. —*Athan. l. i. con. gen. transl.*

say, as the glutton at the feast, 'Sure there is no other heaven but this : ' or if they do expect more by the Messiah, it is only the increase of their earthly felicity. The apostle bestows most of this epistle against this distemper ; and clearly and largely proves unto them, that it is the end of all ceremonies and shadows to direct them to Jesus Christ, the Substance ; and that the rest of Sabbaths^b and Canaan should teach them to look for a further rest, which indeed is their happiness. My text is his conclusion, after divers arguments to that end ; a conclusion so useful to a believer, as containing the ground of all his comforts, the end of all his duty and sufferings, the life and sum of all Gospel promises and christian privileges, that you may easily be satisfied why I have made it the subject of my present discourse. What more welcome to men, under personal afflictions, tiring duty, successions of sufferings, than rest ? What more welcome news, to men under public calamities, displeasing employments, plunderings, losses, sad tidings, &c., which is the common case, than this of rest ? Hearers, I pray God your attentions, intention of spirit, entertainment, and improvement of it, be but half answerable to the verity, necessity, and excellency of this subject, and then you will have cause to bless God, while you live, that ever you heard it, as I have, that ever I studied it.

Sect. 2. The text is, as you may see, the apostle's assertion in an entire proposition, with the concluding illative : the subject is rest ;^c the predicate, it yet remains to the people of God. It is requisite we say somewhat briefly : 1. For explication of the terms ; 2. Of the subject of them.

"Therefore," *i.e.*, it clearly follows, from the former argument, "there remains : " 1. In order of speaking, as the consequence follows the antecedent, or the conclusion, the premises ; so there remains a rest, or it remains that there is another rest. 2. But rather, in order of being, as the bargain remains after the earnest, the performance after the promise, the antitype after the type, and the ultimate end after all the means ; so there remains a rest, "to the people of God." God hath a twofold people within the church : one his only, by a common vocation,^d by an

^b *Lege de hoc epistolam Hieronymi ad Dardanum, tom. iv. fol. (edir. Amerbach,) 28—30, ubi etiam de autoritate hujus Epist. ad Hebr. et modo canonem discernendi.*

^c *De Sabbato spirituali per Sabbatum antiquum figuratum. Vide S. Macarium in Homil. xxxv. p. (mili) 434.*

^d *Heb. x. 30 ; Micah ii. 8 ; 2 Pet. ii. 20 ; John ii. 23 ; Heb. vi. 4—6, and x. 29, 30.*

external acceptation of Christ, and covenanting, sanctified by the blood of the covenant so far as to be separated from the open enemies of Christ, and all without the church, therefore not to be accounted common and unclean in the sense, as Jews and pagans are; but holy, and saints, in a larger sense; as the nation of the Jews, and all proselyted gentiles, were holy before Christ's coming. These are called branches in Christ, not bearing fruit, and shall be cut off, &c.;^e for they are in the church, and in him, by the aforesaid profession and external covenant, but no further. There are, in his kingdom, things that offend, and men that work iniquity, which the angels, at the last day, shall gather out and cast into the lake of fire;^f there are fishes, good and bad, in his net; and tares, with wheat, in his field.^g The son of perdition is one of those given to Christ by the Father, though not as the rest; these be not the people of God my text speaks of. 2. But God hath a peculiar people that are his by special vocation, cordial acceptation of Christ, internal, sincere covenanting, sanctified by the blood of the covenant and Spirit of grace, so far as not only to be separated from open infidels, but from all unregenerate Christians, being branches in Christ, bearing fruit; and for these remains the rest in my text.^h

1. To be God's people, by a forced subjection, *i. e.*, under his dominion, is common to all persons, even open enemies; yea, devils: this yields not comfort.

2. To be his by a verbal covenant and profession, and external call, is common to all in, and of, the visible church, even traitors and secret enemies; yet hath this many privileges, as the external seals, means of grace, common mercies, but no interest in this rest.

3. But to be his by election, union with Christ, and special interest, as before mentioned, is the peculiar properties of those that shall have this rest.

Sect. 3. Quest. But is it to a determinate number of persons, by name, or only to a people thus and thus qualified, viz., persevering believers, without determining by name who they are?ⁱ

^e John xv. 2, 6.

^f Matt. xiii. 41.

^g John xvii. 12.

^h Lege Zuinglii fidei Ration. ad Carol. v. p. 540. Tom. secund. De Eccles.

ⁱ Quid est præscientia, nisi scientia futurorum? Quid autem futurum est Deo, qui omnia supergreditur tempora? Si enim res ipsas in scientia habet, non sunt ei futuræ, sed præsentæ. Ac per hoc non jam præscientia, sed tantum scientia dici potest.—Augustin. l. ii. ad Simplician. q. 2. Cavendum est ne falsa quadam imaginatione, actum voluntatis divinæ quasi præteritum cogitemus.—Scotus, in 1. dist. 40.

Ans. I purpose, in this discourse, to omit controversies; only, in a word, thus: 1. It is promised only to persevering believers, and not to any particular persons by name. 2. It is purposed, with all the conditions of it, and means to it, to a determinate number, called the elect, and known by name, which evidently followeth these plain propositions:

1. There is few will deny that God foreknows, from eternity, who these are, and shall be, numerically, personally, by name.

2. To purpose it only to such, and to know that only these will be such, is, in effect, to purpose it only to these.

3. Especially, if we know how little knowledge and purpose, in God, do differ.

4. However, we must not make his knowledge active, and his purpose idle, much less to contradict each other, as it must be, if, from eternity, he purposed salvation alike to all, and yet from eternity knew that only such and such should receive it.

5. To purpose all persevering believers to salvation, and not to purpose faith and perseverance absolutely to any particular persons, is to purpose salvation absolutely to none at all; yet I know much more is necessary to be said to make this plain, which I purpose not (at least here) to meddle with.

Sect. 4. I. Quest. Is it to the people of God, upon certainty, or only upon possibility?^k

Ans. If only possible, it cannot thus be called theirs.

1. While they are only elect, not called, it is certain to them, we speak of a certainty of the object, by divine purpose, for they are ordained to eternal life first, and therefore believe; and not first believe, and therefore elected.

2. When they are called according to his purpose, then it is certain to them by a certainty of promise also, as sure as if they were named in that promise; for the promise is, to believers, which they may, though but imperfectly, know themselves to be; and though it be yet upon condition of overcoming, and abiding in Christ, and enduring to the end, yet that condition being absolutely promised, it still remaineth absolutely certain

^k 1. Theirs, by purpose, before conversion. Acts xiii. 48. 2. Theirs in law title, or by promise, after conversion. “*Quum æquilibrium illud hoc unum præstat juxta Arminium, ut reddat salutem hominum rem contingentem, et libratam in ancipiti, isne rem tantam impense affectasse dicendus est qui vult esse collocatam in loco tam lubrico, ac veluti tenui filo pendentem, adeo ut vel levissimo momento impellatur ad perniciem?*—*Amyral. Defens. Doct. Calvini*, p. 115.

upon promise : and, indeed, if glory be ours only upon a condition, which condition depends chiefly on our own wills, it were cold comfort to those that know what man's will is, and how certainly we should play the prodigals with this, as we did with our first stock. But I have hitherto understood, that in the behalf of the elect, Christ is resolved, and hath undertaken, for the working and finishing of their faith, and the full effecting his people's salvation ; and not only gives us a (feigned) sufficient grace, not effectual, leaving it to our wills to make it effectual, as some think ; so that, though still the promise of our justification and salvation be conditional, yet God, having manifested his purpose of enabling us to fulfil those conditions, he doth thereby show us a certainty of our salvation, both in his promise and his purpose. Though God's eternal purpose gives us no right to the benefit whatsoever, (some lately say to the contrary,) it being the proper work of God's law or covenant, to confer right or due ; yet the event or fruition of it is made certain by God's unchangeable decree, his eternal willing it, being the first and infallible cause, that, in time, it is accomplished or produced.

CHAP. II.

This Rest defined.

SECT. 1. Now let us see, 1. What this rest is. 2. What these people, and why so called. 3. The truth of this, from other Scripture arguments. 4. Why this rest must yet remain. 5. Why only to this people of God. 6. What use to make of it.

1. And though the sense of the text includes in the word 'rest,'¹ all that ease and safety, which a soul, wearied with the burden of sin and suffering, and pursued by law, wrath, and conscience, hath with Christ in this life, the rest of grace ; yet, because it chiefly intends the rest of eternal glory, as the end and main part, I shall confine my discourse myself to this last.

¹ I doubt not but the Holy Ghost, by this sabbatism, or rest, intends the whole estate of reconciliation, peace, and happiness purchased by Christ : but because that fulness and perfection in glory is the chiefest part, in comparison whereof the beginning in this life is very small, I may very well extend the text to that which itself intends as the principal part ; but I exclude not the beginnings here, though I purpose not the handling of them.

Definition. Rest is the end and perfection of motion. The saint's rest, here in question, is the most happy estate of a Christian, having obtained the end of his course : or, it is the perfect, endless fruition of God, by the perfected saints, according to the measure of their capacity, to which their souls arrive at death ; and both soul and body must fully, after the resurrection and final judgment.

Sect 2. I. I call it the estate of a Christian, though perfection consists in action, as the philosopher thinks, to note both the active and passive fruition, wherein a Christian's blessedness lies, and the established continuance of both.^m Our title will be perfect, and perfectly cleared ; ourselves, and so our capacity, perfected ; our possession and security for its perpetuity perfect ; our reception from God perfect ; our motion or action in and upon him perfect : and, therefore, our fruition of him, and consequently our happiness, will then be perfect. And this is the estate which we now briefly mention, and shall afterwards more fully describe and open to you, and which we hope, by Jesus Christ, very shortly to enter upon, and for ever to possess.

Sect. 3. II. I call it the most happy estate, to difference it, not only from all seeming happiness, which is to be found in the enjoyment of creatures, but also from all those beginnings, foretastes, earns, first fruits, and imperfect degrees, which we have here in this life, while we are but in the way. It is the chief good which the world hath so much disputed, yet mistaken or neglected, without which the greatest confluence of all other good leaves a man miserable ; and with the enjoyment of which, all misery is inconsistent. The beginnings, in our present state of grace, as they are a real part of this, may also be called a state of happiness : but, if considered disjunctly by themselves, they deserve not that title, except in a comparative sense, as a Christian is compared to men out of Christ.

Sect. 4. III. I call it the estate of a Christian, where I mean only the sincere, regenerate, sanctified Christian, whose soul, having discovered that excellency in God through Christ, which is not in the world to be found, thereupon closeth with him, and is cordially set upon him. I do not mean every one that, being born where Christianity is the religion of the country, takes it up as other fashions, and is become a Christian he scarcely knows how,

^m *Beatis non actus proprie, sed status convouit, inquit. Guil. Gibouuf, quod tamen caute intelligendum est.*

or why ; nor mean I those that profess Christ in words, but in works deny him. I shall describe this Christian to you more plainly afterwards. It is an estate to which many pretend, and that with much confidence ; and because they know it is only the Christians, therefore they all call themselves Christians. But multitudes will at last know, to their eternal sorrow, that this is only the inheritance of the saints, and only those Christians shall possess it, who are not of the world : and, therefore, the world hates them who have forsaken all for Christ, and having taken up the cross, do follow him, with patient waiting, till they inherit the promised glory.^a

Sect. 5. IV. I add, that this happiness consists in obtaining the end, where I mean the ultimate and principal end, not any end, *secundum quid*, so called subordinate, or less principal. Not the end of conclusion, in regard of time ; for so every man hath his end ; but the end of intention, which sets the soul to work, and is its prime motive in all its actions. That the chief happiness is in the enjoyment of this end, I shall fully show through the whole discourse, and, therefore, here omit. Everlasting wo to that man who makes that his end here (to the death), which, if he could attain, would not make him happy. Oh, how much doth our everlasting state depend on our right judgment and estimation of our end !

Sect. 6. But it is a great doubt with many, whether the obtaining of this glory may be our end ; nay, concluded, that it is mercenary ; yea, that to make salvation the end of duty, is to be a legalist, and act under a covenant of works, whose tenour is, 'Do this and live.' And many that think it may be our end, yet think it may not be our ultimate end, for that should be only the glory of God. I shall answer these particularly and briefly.

1. It is properly called mercenary, when we expect it as wages for work done ;^o and so we may not make it our end ; otherwise it is only such a mercenariness as Christ commandeth. For, consider what this end is ; it is the fruition of God in Christ : and, if seeking Christ be mercenary, I desire to be so mercenary.

2. It is not a note of a legalist neither : it hath been the ground of a multitude of late mistakes in divinity, to think that

^a Col. i. 12 ; Acts xxvi. 18, and xx. 32 ; John xv. 19 ; Matt. x. 38 ; Luke xiv. 27 ; Heb. x. 36, and vi. 15.

^o Viz. By way of merit strictly so called.

‘Do this and live,’ is only the language of the covenant of works.^p It is true, in some sense it is; but in other, not. The law of works only saith, “Do this,” that is, perfectly fulfil the whole law, “and live,” that is, for so doing: but the law of grace saith, “Do this and live” too; that is, believe in Christ, seek him, obey him sincerely, as thy Lord and King; forsake all, suffer all things, and overcome; and by so doing, or in so doing, as the conditions which the Gospel propounds for salvation, you shall live.^q If you set up the abrogated duties of the law again, you are a legalist: if you set up the duties of the Gospel in Christ’s stead, in whole or in part, you err still. Christ hath his place and work; duty hath its place and work too: set it but in its own place, and expect from it but its own part, and you go right; yea, more, how unsavoury soever the phrase may seem, you may, so far as this comes to, trust to your duty and works; that is, for their own part; and many miscarry in expecting no more from them, as to pray, and to expect nothing the more, that is, from Christ, in a way of duty: for if duty have no share, why may we not trust Christ, as well in a way of disobedience as duty? In a word, you must both use and trust duty in subordination to Christ, but neither use them nor trust them in co-ordination with him. So that this derogates nothing from Christ: for he hath done, and will

^p It was Simon Magus’s doctrine, that men are not saved according to religious works, but according to his grace, as Irenæus repeateth it.—Lib. ii. *advers. Hæres.* c. 20.

^q Notandum est alium esse loquendi modum contra Judaismum et contemptum gratiæ, alium contra securitatem et abusum gratiæ. Cum disputatur contra Judaismum sive justitiam operum, ut Paulus in Rom. et alibi fecit, tum docemur sola fide hominem justificari, *h. e.* Nihil in nobis placere Deo nisi per abnegationem meriti et acceptationem contra doni evangelici. At cum disputatur contra securitatem, et docetur quid respectu amicitie divinæ nobis agendum sit, ut Jacobus fecit, et hodie vel maxime necesse est, ut D. Tossanus in disp. contra pseude evangelicos, et alii pie et prudenter jam pridem monuerint; tunc negatur solam fidem sufficere et præcipiuntur omnia quæ quoquo modo prosunt; sive disponant ad fidem, sive in iis consummetur fides: sicut quæque res fine et effectibus suis consummatur, &c., sive præsens jam amicitia per illa firmetur ita dissiliat, vel etiam augeatur quod ad effectus aliquos et hoc modo quasi impleatur.—*Conrad. Berg. Prax. Cathol. Dissert.* vii. r. 991. Saith Pareus: Videtur notandum quod Deus præstationem promissionum suarum videtur à nostra obedientia suspendere: non suspendit, sed illam cum ista connectit tanquam coherentia, &c. Infidelibus promissiones facta sunt irritæ, non Dei culpa, sed ipsorum perfidia: quoniam promissiones fœderis sunt mutue obligationis. Nec ideo sunt incertæ: quoniam Deus in electis obedientiam operatur per gratiam suam immutabiliter.—*Par. in Gen.* xviii. 19, p. (mihi) 1163.

do all his work perfectly, and enable his people to do theirs: yet he is not properly said to do it himself;^{*} he believes not, repents not, &c., but worketh these in them: that is, enableth and exciteth them to do it. No man must look for more from duty than God hath laid upon it; and so much we may and must.

Sect. 7. II. If I should quote all the scriptures that plainly prove this, I should transcribe a great part of the Bible: I will bring none out of the Old Testament; for I know not whether their authority will here be acknowledged; but I desire the contrary minded, whose consciences are tender of abusing Scripture, and wresting it from the plain sense, to study what tolerable interpretation can be given of these following places, which will not prove that life and salvation may be, yea, must be the end of duty. "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." (John v. 39, 40.) "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." (Matt. xi. 12.) "Strive to enter in at the strait gate." (Matt. vii. 13; Luke xiii. 24.) "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling." (Phil. ii. 12.) "To them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life. Glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good," &c. (Rom. ii. 7, 10.) "So run that you may obtain." (1 Cor. ix. 24.) "A man is not crowned, except he strive lawfully." (2 Tim. ii. 5.) "If we suffer with him, we shall reign with him." (2 Tim. ii. 12.) "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life." (1 Tim. vi. 12.) "That they do good works, lay up a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." (1 Tim. vi. 18, 19.) "If by any means I might attain to the resurrection of the dead; I press toward the mark for the prize of the high-calling," &c. (Phil. iii. 14.) "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and enter in by the gates into the city." (Rev. xxii. 14.) "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit, &c. For I was hungry, and ye," &c. (Matt. xxv.) "Blessed are the pure in heart, &c. They that hunger and thirst, &c. Be glad and rejoice, for great is your reward in heaven." (Matt. ix.) "Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it." (Luke xi. 28.) Yea, the escaping of hell is a right end of duty to a believer. "Let us fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should

^{*} Christ believed for us legally, or so far as the law required faith, but not as it is the condition or command of the new covenant.

seem to come short of it." (Heb. iv. 1.) "Fear him that is able to destroy both soul and body in hell; yea, whatsoever others say, I say unto you, Fear him." (Luke xii. 5.) "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away." (1 Cor. ix. 27.) Multitudes of scriptures and Scripture arguments might be brought, but these may suffice to any that believe Scripture.^s

Sect. 8. III. For those that think this rest may be our end, but not our ultimate end, that must be God's glory only: I will not gainsay them. Only let them consider, what God hath joined, man must not separate. The glorifying himself, and the saving of his people, as I judge, are not two decrees with God, but one decree, to glorify his mercy in their salvation; though we must say, that one is the end of the other: so I think they should be with us together intended. We should aim at the glory of God, not alone considered, without our salvation, but in our salvation. Therefore, I know no warrant for putting such a question to ourselves, as some do, Whether we could be content to be damned, so God were glorified? Christ hath put no such question to us, nor bid us put such to ourselves. Christ had rather that men would inquire after their true willingness to be saved, than their willingness to be damned. Sure I am, Christ himself is offered to faith in terms for the most part respecting the welfare of the sinner, more than his own abstracted glory. He would be received as a Saviour, Mediator, Redeemer, Reconciler, Intercessor, &c. And all the precepts of Scripture, being backed with so many promises and threatenings, every one intended of God as a motive to us, do imply as much. If any think they should be distinguished as two several ends, and God's glory preferred; so they separate them not asunder, I contend not. But I had rather make that high pitch, which Gibieuf and many others insist on, to be the mark at which we should all aim, than the mark by which every weak Christian should try himself.

^s I speak the more of this, because I find that many moderate men, who think they have found the mean between the antinomian and the legalist, yet do foully err on this point. As Mr. F., in the 'Marrow of Modern Divinity,' a book applauded by so many eminent divines, in their commendatory epistles, before it: and because the doctrine 'That we must act from life, but not for life; or in thankfulness to him that hath saved us, but not for the obtaining of salvation,' is of such dangerous consequence, that I would advise all men to take heed of it, that regard their salvation. 1 Cor. xv. ult.; 2 Cor. iv. 17, and v. 10, 11; 2 Pet. i. 10, 11. I here undertake to prove that this fore-mentioned doctrine, reduced to practice, will certainly be the damnation of the practiser: but I hope many antinomians do not practise their own doctrine.

Sect. 9. IV. In the definition, I call a Christian's happiness, the end of his course, thereby meaning, as Paul, (2 Tim. iv. 7,) the whole scope of his life. For as salvation may, and must be, our end, so not only the end of our faith, though that principally, but of all our actions; for as whatsoever we do, must be done to the glory of God, whether eating, drinking, &c., so must they all be done to our salvation. That we may believe for salvation, some will grant, who yet deny that we may do, or obey for it.^t I would it were well understood, for the clearing of many controversies, what the Scripture usually means by faith. Doubtless, the Gospel takes it not so strictly, as philosophers do; but, in a larger sense, for our accepting Christ for our King and Saviour. To believe in his name, and to receive him, are all one:^u but we must receive him as King, as well as Saviour: therefore, believing doth not produce heart-subjection as a fruit, but contains it as an essential part: except we say, that faith receives Christ as a Saviour first, and so justifies before it take him for King, as some think; which is a maimed, unsound, and no Scripture faith.^v I doubt not but the soul more sensibly looks at salvation from Christ, than government by him, in the first work: yet, whatever precedaneous act there may be, it never conceives of Christ, and receives him to justification, nor knows him with the knowledge which is eternal life, till it conceive of him, and know him, and receive him for Lord and King. Therefore there is not such a wide difference between faith and Gospel obedience, or works, as some judge.^x Obedience to the Gospel is put for faith; and disobedience put for unbelief, oft-times in the New Testament. But of this I have spoken more fully elsewhere.

V. Lastly: I make happiness to consist in this end obtained; for it is not the mere promise of it that immediately makes perfectly happy, nor Christ's mere purchase, nor our mere seeking, but the apprehending and obtaining, which sets the crown on the saint's head. When we can say of our work, as Christ of the price paid, "It is finished;" and as Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course: henceforth is laid up for

^t The scriptures before cited, do prove both.

^u John i. 12.

^v See more of this hereafter.

^x In this point of works concurring in justification, I am wholly of Davenant's judgment, 'De Justicia Actuali.' I will not speak so harshly for works, nor in describing faith, as Mr. Mead's sermon doth: yet I believe he meant orthodoxly. See Diodate's notes on James ii., and abundance more cited in my 'Confession.'

me a crown of salvation." (2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.) O that we did all heartily and strongly believe, that we shall never be truly happy till then. Then should we not so dote upon a seeming happiness here.

CHAP. III.

What this Rest presupposeth.

SECT. I. For the clearer understanding yet of the nature of this rest, you must know :

1. There are some things necessarily presupposed to it.

2. Some things really contained in it.

1. All these things are presupposed to this rest.

1. A person in motion, seeking rest. This is man here in the way ; angels and glorified spirits have it already : and the devils and damned are past hope.

Sect. II. 2. An end toward which he moveth for rest : which end must be sufficient for his rest ; else, when it is obtained, it deceiveth him. This can be only God, the chief good. He that taketh any thing else for his happiness, is out of the way the first step. The principal damning sin, is to make any thing besides God, our end or rest. And the first true saving act, is to choose God only for our end and happiness.

Sect. III. 3. A distance is presupposed from this end ; else there can be no motion towards it. This sad distance is the woful case of all mankind since the fall : it was our God that we principally lost, and were shut out of his gracious presence.^y Though some talk of losing only a temporal, earthly felicity ; sure I am, it was God that we fell from, and him we lost, and since are said to be without him in the world ; and there would have been no death, but for sin ; and to enjoy God without death, is neither an earthly, nor temporal enjoyment : nay, in all men at age, here is supposed, not only a distance from God, but also a contrary motion : for sin hath not overthrown our being, nor taken away our motion : but our well-being, and the rectitude of our motion. When Christ comes with regenerating, saving grace, he finds no man sitting still, but all posting to eternal ruin, and making haste towards hell ; till, by conviction, he first brings them to a stand ; and by conversion, turn first their hearts,

^y The only cause of this evil is aversion from good ; as a coachman, if he let the horses run headlong over banks, or which way they will, &c.—*Athanas.* lib. i. *cont. Gent.*

and then their lives, sincerely to himself. Even those that are sanctified and justified from the womb, are yet first the children of Adam, and so of wrath : at least, in order of nature, if not in time.

Sect. IV. 4. Here is presupposed knowledge of the true ultimate end, and its excellency, and a serious intending it.^z For so the motion of the rational creature proceedeth : an unknown end is no end ; it is a contradiction. We cannot make that our end, which we know not ; nor that our chief end, which we know not, or judge not to be the chief good. An unknown good moves not to desire or endeavour : therefore, where it is not truly known that God is this end, and containeth all good in him ; there is no obtaining rest in an ordinary, known way, whatsoever may be in ways that by God are kept secret.^a

Sect. V. 5. Here is presupposed, not only a distance from this rest, but also the true knowledge of this distance. If a man have lost his way, and know it not, he seeks not to return ; if he lose his gold, and know it not, he seeks it not : therefore, they that never knew they were without God, never yet enjoyed him ; and they that never knew they were naturally and actually in the way to hell, did never yet know the way to heaven.^b Nay, there will not only be a knowledge of this distance, and lost estate, but also affections answerable. Can a man be brought to find himself hard by the brink of hell, and not tremble ? or, to find he hath lost his God and his soul, and not cry out, ' I am undone ; ' or can such a stupid soul be so recovered ? This is the sad case of many thousands, and the reason why so few obtain this rest : they will not be convinced, or made sensible, that they are, in point of title, distant from it ; and in point of practice, contrary to it. They have lost their God, their souls, their rest, and do not know it, nor will believe him that tells them so. Whoever travelled towards a place which he thought he was

^z Bonum illud quod est finis hominis, operatis malum, bonum est particulare, non universale et summum. Ut Augustin. Peccare est deficere ab eo quod summum est, ad id quod minus est.—Prolabitur et propria imbecillitate et depravatione deturbatur ac dejicitur ad bonum particulare, et inferius, frustra ibi quærens rationem summi boni.—*Gibieuf*. l. 2. de Liber. c. 20. sect. 2. p. 424. Nemo felices dixerit, quibus non est felicitatis intellectus ; ut Senec. ' De Vit. Beat. ' c. 5.

^a I speak all this of men of age, converted by the word, not of those sanctified in infancy.

^b I mean those that were converted at years of discretion, and received not holiness insensibly in their infancy, as I doubt not but many thousands do.

at already, or sought for that which he knew not he had lost ?
 "The whole need not the physician, but they that are sick."
 (Matt. ix. 12.)

Sect. VI. 6. Here is also supposed, a superior, moving cause, and an influence therefrom, else should we all stand still, and not move a step forward towards our rest ; any more than the inferior wheels in the watch would stir, if you take away the spring, or first mover. This *primum movens* is God. What hand God hath in evil actions, or whether he afford the like influence to their production, I will not here trouble this discourse and the reader to dispute.^c The case is clear in good actions. If God move us not, we cannot move : therefore, it is a most necessary part of our christian wisdom, to keep our subordination to God, and dependance on him ; to be still in the path where he walks, and in that way where his Spirit doth most usually move. Take heed of being estranged or separated from God, or of slacking your daily expectations of renewed help, or of growing insensible of the necessity of the continual influence and assistance of the Spirit. When you once begin to trust your stock of habitual grace, and to depend on your own understanding or resolution for duty and holy walking, you are then in a dangerous, declining state. In every duty remember Christ's words, "Without me ye can do nothing ;" (John xv. 5 ;) and, "not that we are sufficient of ourselves, to do any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God." (2 Cor. iii. 5.)

Sect. VII. 7. Here is supposed an internal principle of life in the person. God moves not man like a stone, but by enduing him first with life, not to enable him to move without God, but thereby to qualify him to move himself, in subordination to God the first Mover. What the nature of this spiritual life is, is a question exceeding difficult.^d Whether, as some think, (but, as I judge, erroneously,) it be Christ himself in person or essence, or the

^c Qui rixas et disputationes inanes de hac re sapienter pensabit, et simul rei altitudinem et humani ingenii imbecillitatem, mirabitur procul dubio hominum pervicaciam, et audacem ignorantiam, qui nec adhuc hanc litem et animorum acerbitatem deponere volunt ! Qui tandem produxit inter pontificiorum doctissimos protracta hac contentio ? viz. inter Jesuitas et Dominicanos, quos prædeterminantes vocant ! Frustra tandem conciliante Aribal (ut ex D. Petavii et Richardi scriptis contra August. et Vincent. Lirinensem, et aliorum patet.) Quid tandem profecerunt nostrorum de hisce dissidia ? et tamen nec unanimes sumus qui videmur unanimes. O quando cognoscent Theologi quam minimum de inscrutabilibus hisce norint præcipue de actibus Dei immanentibus, qui sunt ipsius essentia !

^d I speak not here *de gratiâ operante*, but *de gratiâ operatâ* ; not of the

Holy Ghost personally; or as some will distinguish, with what sense I know not, it is the person of the Holy Ghost, but not personally. Whether it be an accident or quality; or whether it be a spiritual substance, as the soul itself; whether it be only an act, or a disposition, or a habit, as it is generally taken; whether a habit infused, or acquired by frequent acts, to which the soul hath been morally persuaded; or whether it be somewhat distinct from a habit; i. e. a power; viz., *potentia proxima intelligendi, credendi, volendi, &c. in spiritualibus*; which some think the most probable.^e A multitude of such difficulties occur, which will be difficulties while the doctrine of spirits and spiritualities is so dark to us, and that will be while the dust of mortality and corruption is in our eyes. This is my comfort, that death will shortly blow out this dust, and then I shall be resolved of these and many more. In the meantime, I am a sceptic, and know little in this whole doctrine of spirits and spiritual workings, further than Scripture clearly revealeth, and think we might do well to keep closer to its language.

Sect. VIII. Here is presupposed before rest, an actual motion: rest is the end of motion: no motion, no rest. Christianity is not a sedentary profession or employment, nor doth it consist in mere negatives. It is not for feeding, or clothing, &c., that Christ condemns. Not doing good, is not the least evil: sitting still will lose you heaven, as well as if you run from it. I know when we have done all, we are unprofitable servants; and he cannot be a Christian, that relies upon the supposed merit of his works, in proper sense; but yet he that hides his talent, shall receive the wages of a slothful servant.

cause, but the effect; for I doubt not to affirm, so far as these obscure things are known to us on the ordinary grounds, that it is the very essence of God which worketh grace on the soul; for it is his *velle effectivum*, his will. God needs do no more to produce the creature or any quality in it, but only to will it, as Dr. Twisse saith, and Bradwardine more fully and peremptorily: and God's will is his essence. I speak on the supposition of God's immediate operation; for if God work grace by angels, or any second causes, then it cannot be thus said of the act of the second cause, at least so certainly: but of God's act it is still true. So Clemens Alexandr. As God's will is his work, and that is called the world; so his will is man's salvation, and that is called the church.—*Cl. Al. Pædagog.* l. i. c. 6.

^e Nos enim qui totam fidem in carne administrandum credimus, immo et per carnem cujus est, et os, ad proferendum optimum quemque sermonem, et lingua ad non blasphemandum, et cor ad non indignandum, et manus ad operandum et largiendum, tam vetustatem hominis quam novitatem ad moralem, non ad substantialem differentiam pertinere defendimus.—*Tertul.* l. *De Anima.* c. xlv. p. (mihi) 412.

Sect. IX. 9. Here is presupposed, also, as motion, so such motion as is rightly ordered and directed toward the end ; not all motion, labour, seeking, that brings to rest.^f Every way leads not to this end ; but he whose goodness hath appointed the end, hath in his wisdom, and by his sovereign authority, appointed the way. Our own invented ways may seem to us more wise, comely, equal, pleasant ; but that is the best key that will open the lock, which none but that of God's appointing will do. O the pains that sinners take, and worldlings take, but not for this rest ! O the pains and cost that many an ignorant and superstitious soul is at for this rest, but all in vain ! How many have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge ; who, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God : nor known, "that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." (Rom. x. 2—4.) Christ is the door ; the only way to this rest. Some will allow nothing else to be called the way, lest it derogate from Christ. The truth is, Christ is the only way to the Father ; yet faith is the way to Christ ; and Gospel obedience, or faith and works, the way for those to walk in, that are in Christ.^g There be, as before, many ways requisite in subordination to Christ, but none in co-ordination with him ; so then it is only God's way that will lead to this end and rest.

^f Cum enim homo sit per naturam mobilis, et si honesta sponte sua refugit, non tamen à motu quievit. Movetur itaque non jam quidem ad virtutem, nec ad videndum Deum ; sed quæ non sunt, versans vires suas pervertit ; abutens his ad eas, quas excogitavit concupiscentias carnis ; est quippe condita libera ; potest bona ut eligere, ita et adversari, &c.—*Athanas. lib. 1. cont. Gen. Trans.*

^g Object. If many conditions are required in those that are to be justified, then we are not justified of mere grace. Answ. I distinguish of conditions. If many conditions are required in the justified which bear proportion with God's justice, I grant all. But if the conditions which are required in those that must be justified do bear no proportion with God's justice, I deny that it thence follows that justification is not of mere grace. For it is not all conditions that are excluded by grace, but those which may bear the nature of merit. Camero, in 'Op. Fol. impres.' p. 365 ; "Cum igitur operibus justificatio negatur, vis justificandi meritoria negatur." John Crocius 'De Justif.' disput. xii. p. 666. So Rivius Tractat. de Redemp. Dr. Fownds, of 'Christ's three Offices ;' Rivet. 'On Genes.,' and generally our divines, against the papists, do oppose the merit of works, as the point wherein our difference lieth. They make it all one to say that works do not justify, and they do not merit : meaning by works, as Paul doth, such as make the reward to be not of grace, but of debt. (Rom. iv. 3, 4.) But obedience to Christ, as a condition only, they deny not.

Sect. X. 10. There is supposed, also, as motion rightly ordered, so strong and constant motion, which may reach the end. If there be not strength put to the bow, the arrow will not reach the mark: the lazy world, that think all too much, will find this to their cost one day. They that think less ado might have served, do but reproach Christ for making us so much to do: they that have been most holy, watchful, painful, to get faith and assurance, do find, when they come to die, all too little. We see, daily, the best Christians, when dying, repent their negligence: I never knew any, then, repent his holiness and diligence. It would grieve a man's soul to see a multitude of mistaken sinners lay out their wit, and care, and pains, for a thing of nought, and think to have eternal salvation with a wish. If the way to heaven be not far harder than the world imagines, then Christ and his apostles knew not the way, or else have deceived us; for they have told us, "that the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence; that the gate is strait, and the way narrow; and we must strive, if we will enter; for many shall seek to enter, and not be able,"^h which implies the faintness of their seeking, and that they put not strength to the work; and, "that the righteous themselves are scarcely saved." If ever souls obtain salvation in the world's common, careless, easy way, then I will say there is a nearer way found out than ever God, in Scripture, hath revealed to the sons of men. But when they have obtained life and rest in this way, let them boast of it; till then, let them give us leave, who would fain go upon sure grounds, in point of eternal salvation, to believe that God knows the way better than they, and that his word is a true and infallible discovery thereof.

I have seen this doctrine also thrown by with contempt by others, who say, 'What, do you set us a-working for heaven? Doth our duty do any thing? Hath not Christ done all? Is not this to make him a half Saviour, and to preach law?'

Ans. It is to preach the law of Christ: his subjects are not lawless.ⁱ It is to preach duty to Christ: no more exact a

^h Matt. xi. 12; Matt. vii. 13; Luke xiii. 24, 25; 1 Pet. iv. 18.

ⁱ Age Marcion, omnesque jam commiserones et credibiles ejus hæretici, quid audebitis dicere? Resciditne Christus priora præcepta, non occidendi, non adulterandi, non furandi, non falsum testandi, diligendi patrem et matrem? An et illa servavit, et quod deerat, adjecit?—*Tertul. advers. Marcion*, lib. 4. c. xxxvi. p. 524. Christus interrogatus à quodam, præceptor optime, quid faciens vitam æternam possidebo? De præceptis creatoris, an ea sciret, id est, faceret, expostulavit: ad contestandum præceptis creatoris vitam acquiri sempiternam.—*Tertul. ubi supra*.

requirer of duty, or hater of sin, than Christ. Christ hath done, and will do all his work, and therefore is a perfect Saviour; but yet leaves for us a work too. He hath paid all the price, and left us none to pay; yet he never intended his purchase should put us into absolute, immediate, personal title to glory, in point of law, much less into immediate possession. What title, improperly so called, we may have from his own, and his Father's secret counsel, is nothing to the question: he hath purchased the crown to bestow only on condition of believing, denying all for him, suffering with him, persevering and overcoming.^k He hath purchased justification, to bestow only on condition of our believing; yea, repenting and believing.^l That the first grace hath any such condition, I will not affirm; but following mercies have; though it is Christ that enableth also to perform the condition. It is not a Saviour offered, but received also, that must save: it is not the blood of Christ shed only, but applied also, that must fully deliver; nor is it applied to the justification or salvation of a sleepy soul; nor doth Christ carry us to heaven in a chair of security. Where he will pardon, he will make you pray, "Forgive us our trespasses;" and where he will give righteousness, he will give hungering and thirsting. It is not through any imperfection in Christ, that the righteous are scarcely saved; no, nor that the wicked perish, as they shall be convinced one day. In the same sense as the prayer of the faithful, if fervent, availeth for outward mercies, in the same sense it prevaileth for salvation also; for Christ hath purchased both. And as baptism is said to save us, so other duties too. Our righteousness, which the law of works requireth, and by which it is satisfied, is wholly in Christ, and not one grain in ourselves; nor must we dare to think of patching up a legal righteousness of Christ's and our own together: that is, that our doings can be the least part of satisfaction for our sins, or proper merit. But yet ourselves must personally fulfil the conditions of the new covenant, and so have a personal, evangelical righteousness, or never be saved by Christ's righteousness; therefore, say not it is

^k Ut actus justificandi, sic ejus modus et ratio tota dependet à Dei voluntate.—*Johan. Crocius de Justif. Disput.* xii. p. 656.

^l Adjunxit plane et addidit legem, certa nos conditione et sponsione constringens, ut sic nobis dimitti debita postulemus, ut ipsi debitoribus nostris dimittimus, scientes impetrari non posse quod pro peccatis petimus, nisi et ipsi, &c.—*Cyprian. in Orat. Dominic.* sect. xvii. p. 314. Lege Clem. Alexandr. *Stromat.* lib. 2, paulò post init, against those that cry down law and fear. (Gal. iii. 3.)

not duty, but Christ; for it is Christ in a way of duty. As duty cannot do it without Christ, so Christ will not do it without duty: but of this, enough before.

And as this motion must be strong, so must it be constant; or it will fall short of rest. To begin in the Spirit, and end in the flesh, will not bring to the end of the saints. The certainty of the saints' perseverance doth not make admonition to constancy unuseful: men, as seemingly holy as the best of us, have fallen off. He that knew it impossible, in the foundation, to deceive the elect, yet saw it necessary to warn us, that he only that endureth to the end, shall be saved.^m Read but the promises, (Rev. ii. and iii.) "To him that overcometh." Christ's own disciples must be commanded to continue in his love, and that by keeping his commandments; and to abide in him, and his word in them, and he in them. It will seem strange to some, that Christ should command us, that "he abide in us." (See John xv. 4—10, and viii. 31; 1 John xxii. 4, 28.)

Sect. XI. 11. There is presupposed, also, to the obtaining of this rest, a strong desire after it. The soul's motion is not that which we call violent or constrained, (none can force it,) but free. As every thing inclines to its proper centre, so the rational creature is carried on in all its motion, with desires after its end. This end is the first thing intended, and chief desired, though last obtained. Observe it, and believe it, whoever thou art; there never was a soul that made Christ and glory the principal end, nor that obtained rest with God, whose desire was not set upon him, and that above all things else in the world whatsoever. Christ brings the heart to heaven first, and then the person. His own mouth spoke it, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Matt. vi. 21.) A sad conclusion to thousands of professed Christians. He that had truly rather have the enjoyment of God in Christ, than any thing in the world, shall have it; and he that had rather have any thing else, shall not have this, except God change him. It is true, the remainder of our old nature will much weaken and interrupt these desires, but never overcome them. The passionate motion of them is oft strongest towards inferior, sensible things; but the serious, deliberate will or choice, which is the rational desire, is most for God.

Sect. XII. 12. Lastly: here is presupposed painfulness and

^m Matt. xxiv. 13; Mark xiii. 13, 22; Acts xiii. 43, and xiv. 22; Rom. xi. 22; Col. i. 23; Heb. viii. 9; Jam. i. 25.

weariness in our motion. This ariseth not from any evil in the work or way, for Christ's yoke is easy, his burden light, and his commands not grievous:ⁿ but, 1. From the opposition we meet with; 2. The contrary principles still remaining in our nature, which will make us cry out, "O, wretched men!" (Rom. vii. 24.) 3. From the weakness of our graces, and so of our motion. Great labour, where there is a suitable strength, is a pleasure; but to the weak, how painful! With what panting and weariness doth a feeble man ascend that hill which the sound man runs up with ease. We are all, even the best, but feeble. An easy, dull, profession of religion, that never encountereth with these difficulties and pains, is a sad sign of an unsound heart. Christ, indeed, hath freed us from the impossibilities of the covenant of works, and from the burden and yoke of legal ceremonies, but not from the difficulties and pains of Gospel duties. 4. Our continued distance from the end, will raise some grief also; for desire and hope, implying the absence of the thing desired and hoped for, do ever imply also some grief for that absence; which all vanish when we come to possession. All these twelve things are implied in a Christian's motion, and so presupposed to his rest. And he only that hath the pre-requisite qualifications, shall have the crown. Here, therefore, should Christians lay out their utmost care and industry. See to your part, and God will certainly see to his part. Look you to your hearts and duties, in which God is ready with assisting grace, and he will see that you lose not the reward.^o O, how most Christians wrong God and themselves, with being more solicitous about God's part of the work than their own, as if God's faithfulness were more to be suspected than their unfaithful, treacherous hearts! This rest is glorious, and God is faithful; Christ's death is sufficient, and the promise is universal, free, and true. You need not fear missing of heaven through the deficiency or fault of any of these. But yet, for all these, the falseness of your own hearts, if you look not to them, may undo you. If you doubt of this, believe the Holy Ghost. "Having a promise left us of entering into his rest, let us fear lest any of you should seem to come short of it." (Heb. iv. 1.) The promise is true, but conditional. Never fear whether God will break promise, but fear lest you should not truly perform the condition, for nothing else can bereave you of the benefit.

ⁿ Prov. iv. 6; Matt. xi. 36; 1 John v. 3.

^o That salvation is given *per modum præmii*, Dr. Twisse saith oft, cont. Corvin, is past all doubt.

CHAP. IV.

What this Rest containeth.

BUT all this is only the outward court, or at least not the holiest of all. Now we have ascended the steps, may we look within the veil? May we show what this rest containeth, as well as what it presupposeth? But, alas! how little know I of that whereof I am about to speak. Shall I speak before I know? But if I stay till I clearly know, I shall not come again to speak. That glimpse which Paul saw, contained that which could not, or must not, be uttered, or both.^a And if Paul had had a tongue to have uttered it, it would have done no good, except his hearers had ears to hear it. If Paul had spoken the things of heaven in the language of heaven, and none understood that language, what the better? Therefore, I will speak while I may, that little, very little which I do know of it, rather than be wholly silent. The Lord reveal it to me, that I may reveal it to you; and the Lord open some light, and show both you and me his inheritance: not, as to Balaam only, whose eyes the vision of God opened, to see the goodness of Jacob's tents, and Israel's tabernacles, where he had no portion, but from whence must come his own destruction:^r nor as to Moses, who had only a discovery, instead of possession, and saw the land which he never entered.^s But as the pearl was revealed to the merchant in the Gospel, who rested not till he had sold all he had, and bought it:^t and as heaven was opened to blessed Stephen, which he was shortly to enter, and the glory showed him, which should be his own possession.^u

Sect. I. 1. There is contained in this rest, 1. A cessation from motion or action; not of all the action, but of that which hath the nature of a means, and implies the absence of the end. When we have obtained the haven, we have done sailing. When the workman hath his wages, it is implied he hath done his work. When we are at our journey's end, we have done with the way. All motion ends at the centre, and all means cease when we have the end. Therefore, prophesying ceaseth, tongues fail, and knowledge shall be done away; that is, so far

^a 2 Cor. xii. 4.^r Num. xxiv. 15, and xvi. 5.^s Deut. xxxiv. 1—4.^t Matt. xiii. 44—46.^u Acts vii. 55, 56.

as it had the nature of a means, and was imperfect.* And so faith may be said to cease : not all faith, for how shall we know all things past, which we saw not but by believing ? How shall we know the last judgment, the resurrection of the body beforehand, but by believing ? How shall we know the life everlasting, the eternity of the joys we possess, but by believing ? But all that faith, which, as a means referred to the chief end, shall cease. There shall be no more prayer, because no more necessity, but the full enjoyment of what we prayed for. Whether the soul pray for the body's resurrection, for the last judgment, &c., or whether soul and body pray for the eternal continuance of their joys, is to me yet unknown ; otherwise, we shall not need to pray for what we have, and we shall have all that is desirable. Neither shall we need to fast, and weep, and watch, any more, being out of the reach of sin and temptations. Nor will there be use for instructions and exhortations : preaching is done, the ministry of man ceaseth, sacraments useless, the labourers called in because the harvest is gathered, the tares burned, and the work done, the unregenerate past hope, the saints past fear for ever, much less shall there be any need of labouring for inferior ends, as here we do, seeing they will all devolve themselves into the ocean of the ultimate end, and the lesser good be wholly swallowed up of the greatest.

Sect. II. 2. This rest containeth a perfect freedom from all the evils that accompanied us through our course, and which necessarily follow our absence from the chief good. Besides our freedom from the eternal flames, and restless miseries, which the neglecters of Christ and grace, must remedilessly endure ; an inheritance which, both by birth and actual merit, was due to us as well as to them. As God will not know the wicked so as to own them ; so neither will heaven know iniquity to receive it : for there entereth nothing that defileth, or is unclean ; all that remains without.† And, doubtless, there is not such a thing as grief and sorrow known there : nor is there such a thing as a pale face, a languid body, feeble joints, unable infancy, decrepit age, peccant

* (1 Cor. xiii. 8.) There are two excellent parts of our glory, which I have here omitted, and only put them among the adjuncts, which should not have been done. 1. That we shall be members of the heavenly Jerusalem, and so glorify God in that blessed society. 2. That we shall see the face of our glorified Redeemer ; and his person shall everlastingly be glorified in us. Were it again to do, I should more largely treat of both these, as principal parts of our glory and felicity.

† Rev. xxi. 27.

humours, dolorous sickness, griping fears, consuming cares, nor whatsoever deserves the name of evil. Indeed, a gale of groans and sighs, a stream of tears, accompanied us to the very gates, and there bid us farewell for ever. We did weep and lament, when the world did rejoice; but our sorrow is turned into joy, and our joy shall no man take from us.^z God were not the chief and perfect good, if the full fruition of him did not free us from all evil. But we shall have occasion to speak more fully of this in that which follows.

Sect. III. 3. This rest containeth the highest degree of the saints' personal perfection, both of soul and body.^a This necessarily qualifies them to enjoy the glory, and thoroughly to partake of the sweetness of it. Were the glory ever so great, and themselves not made capable by a personal perfection suitable thereto, it would be little to them. There is necessary a right disposition of the recipient, to a right enjoying, and affecting. This is one thing that makes the saints' joys there so great. Here, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor heart conceived, what God hath laid up for them that wait for him." For this eye of flesh is not capable of seeing it, nor this ear of hearing it, nor this heart of understanding it; but there the eye, and ear, and heart, are made capable; else how do they enjoy it? The more perfect the sight is, the more delightful the beautiful object. The more perfect the appetite, the sweeter the food. The more musical the ear, the more pleasant the melody. The more perfect the soul, the more joyous those joys, and the more glorious to us is that glory. Nor is it only our sinful imperfection that is here to be removed; nor only that which is the fruit of sin, but that which adhered to us in our pure naturals. Adam's dressing the garden, was neither sin nor the fruit of sin: nor is either to be less glorious than the stars, or the sun in the firmament of our Father: yet is this the dignity to which the righteous shall be advanced.^b There is far more procured by Christ, than was lost by Adam. It is the misery of wicked men here, that all without them is mercy, excellent mercies, but within them a heart full of sin shuts the door against all, and makes them but the more miserable. When all is well within, then all

^z John xvi. 20—22.

^a *Beata vita est conveniens naturæ suæ: quæ non aliter contingere potest, quam si primum sana mens est, et in perpetua possessione sanitatis suæ.*—*Seneca, de vit. beat. c. 3.*

^b Gen. ii. 15; Dan. x. 13.

is well indeed. The near good is the best, and the near evil and enemy the worst. Therefore will God, as a special part of his saints' happiness, perfect themselves, as well as their condition.

Sect. IV. 4. This rest containeth, as the principal part, our nearest fruition of God, the chiefest good. And here, reader, wonder not if I be at a loss, and if my apprehensions receive but little of that which is in my expressions. If, to the beloved disciple that durst speak and inquire into Christ's secrets, and was filled with his revelations, and saw the New Jerusalem in her glory, and had seen Christ, Moses, and Elias, in part of theirs; if it did not appear to him what it shall be, but only in general, that when Christ appears we shall be like him,^c no wonder if I know little. When I know so little of God, I cannot know much what it is to enjoy him. When it is so little I know of my own soul, either its quiddity or quality, while it is here in this tabernacle, how little must I needs know of the infinite Majesty, or the state of this soul when it is advanced to that enjoyment! If I know so little of spirits and spirituals, how little of the Father of spirits! Nay, if I never saw that creature which contains not something unsearchable; nor the worm so small, which affordeth not matter for questions to puzzle the greatest philosopher I ever met with; no wonder, then, if mine eyes fail, when I would look at God, my tongue fail me in speaking of him, and my heart in conceiving.^d As long as the Athenian superscription doth so too well suit with my sacrifices, "To the unknown God," and while I cannot contain the smallest rivulet, it is little I can contain of this immense ocean. We shall never be capable of clearly knowing, till we are capable of fully enjoying; nay, nor till we do actually enjoy him. What strange conceivings hath a man, born blind, of the sun, and its light; or a man born deaf, of the nature of sounds and music! so do we yet want that sense by which God must be clearly known. I stand and look upon a heap of ants, and see them all, with one view, very busy to little purpose. They know not me, my being, nature, or thoughts, though I am their fellow-creature; how little, then, must we know of the great Creator, though he with one view continually beholds us all. Yet a knowledge we have, though

^c 1 John iii. 2.

^d O qui perpetua mundum ratione gubernas,
Terrarum cœlique sator, qui tempus ad ævum.
Ire jubes, stabilisque manens das cuncta moveri!
Principium, rector, dux, semita, terminus idem;
Tu requies tranquilla piis, tu cernere finis! &c.—*Boetius*.

Vid. Gerson, part. iii., Alphabet. Divini Amoris, cap. 14, Egrege de attributis

imperfect, and such as must be done away. A glimpse the saints behold, though but in a glass, which makes us capable of some poor, general, dark apprehensions of what we shall behold in glory. If I should tell a worldling but what the holiness and spiritual joys of the saints on earth are, he cannot know it; for grace cannot be clearly known without grace: how much less could he conceive it, should I tell him of this glory! But to the saints I may be somewhat more encouraged to speak; for grace giveth them a dark knowledge, and slight taste of the glory.

As all good whatsoever is comprised in God,^e and all in the creature are but drops of this ocean; so all the glory of the blessed is comprised in their enjoyment of God: and if there be any mediate joys there, they are but drops from this. If men and angels should study to speak the blessedness of that estate in one word, what can they say beyond this, 'That it is the nearest enjoyment of God?' Say, 'They have God;' and you say, 'They have all that is worth the having.' O the full joys offered to a believer in that one sentence of Christ's! I would not, for all the world, that one verse had been left out of the Bible: "Father, I will, that those whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me." (John xvii. 24.) Every word is full of life and joy. If the Queen of Sheba had cause to say of Solomon's glory, "Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants that stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom,"^f then, sure, they that stand continually before God, and see his glory, and the glory of the Lamb, are somewhat more than happy: to them will Christ "give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God;" and "to eat et excellentiis divinis expatiantem. Beatitudo sumitur objectivè et formaliter: quod beatos facit ipso fruente, hoc est, divina bonitas, quæ est summum bonum. Beatitudo autem formalis est ipsa fruitio, &c.—*Stella in Luc.* 10, tom. ii. p. 45.

^e God is defined to be one that wanteth nothing, and is sufficient for himself, and full of himself, in whom all things do consist, and who himself giveth being to all, saith Athanasius, lib. i. cont. Gentil. God is by nature incorporeal, neither subject to sight nor touch. He is most powerful, and nothing holdeth him; but he holdeth or containeth all things, and ruleth over all.—*Idem ibid.*

^f 1 Kings x. 8. Some interpret most of those scriptures in the Revelations, of the church's glory on earth: and then it would hold à minore. Tu es recreator omnium qui dixisti, Venite ad me omnes qui laboratis, &c. Anima enim quæ est in te, rudicata in centro suo et recreata, et quieta est; quæ vero in te non est, multis vanis phantasmatibus fatigatur. Tu sufficientissimus es; qui te habet, totum habet; qui non, mendicus est, et pauper, quia quicquid præter te est, non reficit, non sufficit.—*Gerson. part. iii. Alphabet. Amoris. Divini, cap. 14.*

of the hidden manna." (Rev. ii. 7, 17.) Yea, "He will make them pillars in the temple of God, and they shall go no more out: and he will write upon them the name of his God, and the name of the city of his God, New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from God, and his own new name." (Rev. iii. 12.) Yea, more, if more may be, "He will grant them to sit with him in his throne." (Rev. iii. 21.) "These are they who come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them: and the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and lead them unto living fountains of water; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. (Rev. vii. 14, 15, 17.) And may we not now boast with the spouse, "This is my beloved, O daughters of Jerusalem!" And this is the glory of the saints! O blind, deceived world, can you show us such a glory? "This is the city of our God, where the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God." "The glory of God shall enlighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." (Rev. xxi. 3, 24.) "And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him, and they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads. These sayings are faithful and true, and these are the things that must shortly be done." (Rev. xxii. 3, 4, 6.) And now we say, as Mephibosheth, 'Let the world take all besides, if we may but see the face of our Lord in peace.' If the Lord lift up the light of his countenance on us here, it puts more gladness in our hearts than the world's increase can do. (Psal. iv. 6, 7.) How much more, when in his^g light we shall have light without darkness; and he shall make us full of joy with his countenance. "Rejoice, therefore, in the Lord, O ye righteous; and shout for joy, all ye that are upright of heart;" and say with his servant David, "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance; the lines are fallen to me in pleasant places: yea, I have a goodly heritage: I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand I shall not be moved: therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth; my flesh also shall rest in hope: for he will not leave me in the grave, nor suffer me for ever to see corruption. He

^g Psal. xxxvi. 9; Acts ii. 28, and Psal. xxxiii. 1.

will show me the path of life, and bring me into his presence, where is fulness of joy; and at his right hand, where are pleasures for evermore." (Psal. xvi. 5, 6, 8—11.) "Whom, therefore, have I in heaven but him, or in earth that I desire besides him? My flesh and my heart have failed, and will fail me; but God is the strength of my heart, and will be my portion for ever; he shall guide me with his counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory; and as they that are far from him shall perish, so it is good, the chief good, for us to be near to God." (Psal. lxxiii. 24—28.)

The advancement is exceeding high:^h what irreverent, damnable presumption would it have been, once to have thought or spoken of such a thing, if God had not spoken it before us! I durst not have thought of the saint's preferment in this life, as Scripture sets it forth, had it not been the express truth of God. What vile unmannerliness, to talk of "being sons of God," "speaking to him," "having fellowship and communion with him," "dwelling in him and he in us;" if this had not been God's own language! How much less durst we have once thought of "being brighter than the sun in glory;" of "being co-heirs with Christ; of judging the world; of sitting on Christ's throne; of being one with him;" if we had not all this from the mouth, and under the hand of God! But hath he said it, and shall it not come to pass? Hath he spoken it, and will he not do it? Yes, as true as the Lord God is true, thus shall it be done to the man whom Christ delights to honour. "The eternal God is their refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and the beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him, and the Lord shall cover them all the day long, and he shall dwell between their shoulders." (Deut. xxxiii. 27, 28.) "Surely, goodness and mercy shall follow them all the days of their lives, and then they shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." (Psal. xxiii. 6.) O Christians! believe and consider this. Is sun, and moon, and stars, and all creatures, called upon to praise the Lord?ⁱ What then should his people do? Surely they are nearer him, and enjoy more of him than the brutes shall do. All his works praise him, but, above all, let his saints bless him. (Psal. cv. 10.) O let them speak of the glory of his

^h Admodum cautè legenda existimo, quæ post alios D. Gibieuf. scribit de nostri deificatione in l. ii. de Libert. c. xxvii. sect. 8—10, &c.; ut et quæ Aug. in P l. xlii. et Serm. lxi. de verb. Evang. ab ipso citata. John i. 12; 1 John i. 3; 1 John iv. 15, 16.

ⁱ Psal. cxlviii.

kingdom, and talk of his power : to make known to the sons of men, his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom. (Ver. 11, 12.) "Let his praise be in the congregation of his saints ; let Israel rejoice in him that made him : let the children of Zion be joyful in their King. Let the saints be joyful in glory : let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth ; for the Lord taketh pleasure in his people, and will beautify the meek with salvation." (Psal. cxlix. 1, 2, 4—6.) "This is the light that is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart. (Psal. xcvi. 11.) Yea, "this honour have all his saints." (Psal. cxlix. 9.) If the estate of the devils, before their fall, were not much meaner than this, and perhaps lower than some of their fellow-angels, surely their sin was most accursed and detestable. Could they aspire higher ? And was there yet room for discontent ? What is it, then, that would satisfy them ? Indeed, the distance that we sinners and mortals are at from our God, leaves us some excuse for discontent with our estate. The poor soul out of the depth cries, and cries aloud, as if his Father were out of hearing : sometime he chides the interposing clouds, sometime he is angry at the vast gulf that is set between ; sometime he would have the veil of mortality drawn aside, and thinks death hath forgot his business ; he ever quarrels with this sin that separates, and longs till it be separated from the soul, that it may separate God and him no more : why, poor Christian, be of good cheer ; the time is near, when God and thou shalt be near, and as near as thou canst well desire : thou shalt dwell in his family ; is that enough ? It is better to be a door-keeper in his house, than enjoy the portion of the wicked. Thou shalt ever stand before him, about his throne, in the room with him, in his presence chamber. Wouldst thou yet be nearer ? Thou shalt be his child, and he thy father ; thou shalt be an heir of his kingdom ; yea, more, the spouse of his Son ; and what more canst thou desire ? Thou shalt be a member of the body of his Son, he shall be thy head ; thou shalt be one with him, who is one with the Father. Read what he hath desired for thee of his Father. "That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us ; and the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one ; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." (John

xvii. 2 —23.) What can you desire yet more? Except you will, as some do, abuse Christ's expression of oneness, to conceive of such a union, as shall deify us; which were a sin one step beyond the aspiring arrogance of Adam; and, I think, beyond that of the devils. A real conjunction, improperly called union, we may expect; and a true union of affections. A moral union, improperly still called union, and a true relative union, such as is between the members of the same politic body and the head: yea, such as is between the husband and the wife, who are called one flesh. And a real communion, and communication of real favours, flowing from that relative union. If there be any more, it is acknowledged unconceivable, and consequently unexpressible, and so not to be spoken of. If any one can conceive of a proper real^k union and identity, which shall neither be a unity of essence, nor of person with Christ, I shall not oppose it: but to think of such a union were high blasphemy. Nor must you think of a union, as some do, upon natural grounds, following the dark mistaken principles of Plato and Plotinus. If your thoughts be not guided and limited by Scripture in this, you are lost.¹

Quest. But how is it we shall enjoy God?

Answ. That is the fifth and last we come to.

Sect. V. This rest containeth a sweet and constant action of all the powers of the soul and body in this fruition of God. It is not the rest of a stone, which ceaseth from all motion, when it attains the centre. The senses themselves, as I judge, are not only passive in receiving their object, but partly passive and partly active. Whether the external senses, such as now we have, shall be continued and employed in this work, is a great doubt. For some of them, it is usually acknowledged they shall cease, because their being importeth their use, and their use implieth our estate of imperfection: as there is no use for eating and drinking, so neither for the taste. But for other senses the question will be harder; for Job saith, "I shall see him with these eyes."

But do not all senses imply our imperfection? If Job did speak of more than a redemption from this present distress, as it is like he did, yet certainly these eyes will be made so spiritual, that whether the name of sense, in the same sense as now, shall

^k I take not the word 'real' as opposite to feigned, but to relative. see Mr. Wallis's Answer to the Lord Brooks fully on this.

¹ De hoc lege Car. Causan, vol. ii. Exercit. l. iv. fol. 66, 67.

befit them, is a question. This body shall be so changed, that it shall be no more flesh and blood,^m for “that cannot inherit the kingdom of God ;” (1 Cor. xv. 50 ;) but “a spiritual body. (ver. 44.) “That which we sow, we sow not that body that shall be ; but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.” (1 Cor. xv. 37, 38.) As the ore is cast into the fire a stone, but comes forth so pure a metal, that it deserves another name, and so the difference betwixt it and the gold exceeding great : so far greater will the change of our bodies and senses be ; even so great, as now we cannot conceive. If grace make a Christian differ so much from what he was, that the Christian could say to his companion, ‘*Ego non sum ego,*’ ‘I am not the man I was ;’ how much more will glory make us differ ? We may then say much more, ‘This is not the body I had, and these are not the senses I had.’ But because we have no other name for them, let us call them senses, call them eyes and ears, seeing and hearing : but thus conceive of the difference ; that as much as a body spiritual, above the sun in glory, exceedeth these frail, noisome, diseased lumps of flesh or dirt that now we carry about us ; so far shall our sense of seeing and hearing exceed these we now possess : for the change of the senses must be conceived proportionable to the change of the body. And, doubtless, as God advanceth our sense, and enlargeth our capacity ; so will he advance the happiness of those senses, and fill up with himself all that capacity.ⁿ And certainly the body should not be raised up and continued, if it should not share of the glory : for as it hath shared in the obedience and sufferings, so shall it also do in the blessedness : and as Christ bought the whole man, so shall the whole partake of the everlasting benefits of the purchase. The same difference is to be

^m I think the apostle speaks of flesh and blood in a proper sense, and not of sin : for them that say the flesh is but the soul’s instrument, and therefore should no more suffer than a cup, because poison was put in it ; or a sword for killing a man, &c. they may find this objection fully answered by Tertulian, lib. de Resurrect. Carnis. c. xvi. p. 410, where he both shows that the instruments may suffer according to their capacity, and that the flesh is more than a mere instrument to the soul, even a servant and an associate.

ⁿ Nos vero etiam virtutes carnis opponimus ; ergo et bene operator tenebitur præmio. Etsi anima est quæ agit, et impellit in omnia ; carnis obsequium est : dum non licet aut injustum judicem credi aut inertem ; injustum, si sociam bonorum operum à præmiis arceat ; inertem, si sociam malorum à suppliciis secernat. Quum humana censura eo perfectior habeatur, quo etiam ministros facti cujusque deposcit, nec parcens, nec invidens illis, quo minus cum autoribus, aut pænæ aut gratiæ communicent fructum.—*Tertul. lib. de Resurrect. Carnis, c. xvi. p. (mihi) 410.*

allowed for the tongue. For though, perhaps, that which we now call the tongue, the voice, the language, shall not then be : yet, with the forementioned, unconceivable change, it may continue. Certain it is, it shall be the everlasting work of those blessed saints, to stand before the throne of God and the Lamb, and to praise him for ever and ever. As their eyes and hearts shall be filled with his knowledge, with his glory, and with his love ; so shall their mouths be filled with his praises. Go on, therefore, O ye saints, while you are on earth, in that divine duty. Learn, O learn, that saint-beseeming work : for in the mouths of his saints his praise is comely. Pray, but still praise : hear and read, but still praise :^o praise him in the presence of his people ; for it shall be your eternal work : praise him, while his enemies deride and abuse you : you shall praise him, while they shall bewail it, and admire you. O blessed employment, to sound forth for ever, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive honour, glory, and power !" (Rev. iv. 11.) And "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing ; for he hath redeemed us to God by his blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation ; and hath made us unto our God, kings and priests." (Rev. v. 9, 10, 12.) "Allelujah, salvation, and honour, and glory, and power, unto the Lord our God : praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, small and great. Allelujah : for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." (Rev. xix. 1, 5, 6.) O Christians ! this is the blessed rest ; a rest without rest : for, "they rest not day nor night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." (Rev. iv. 8.) Sing forth his praises now, ye saints ; it is a work our master Christ has taught us. And you shall for ever sing before him the song of Moses, and the song of the Lamb : "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty ; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." (Rev. xv. 3.)

Sect. VI. And if the body shall be thus employed, O how shall the soul be taken up ! As its powers and capacities are greatest, so its actions strongest, and its enjoyments sweetest ; as the bodily senses have their proper aptitude and action, whereby they receive and enjoy their objects, so doth the soul in its own action enjoy its own object,ⁱ by knowing, by thinking, and remember-

^o Psal. xxxiii. 1, 2, and cxlvii.

ing, by loving, and by delightful joying: this is the soul's enjoying.^p By these eyes it sees, and by these arms it embraceth. If it might be said of the disciples with Christ on earth, much more that behold him in his glory, "Blessed are the eyes that see the things that ye see, and the ears that hear the things that ye hear; for many princes and great ones have desired, and hoped, to see the things that ye see, and have not seen them," &c. (Matt. xiii. 16, 17.)

Knowledge of itself is very desirable, even the knowledge of some evil, though not the evil itself. As far as the rational soul exceeds the sensitive, so far the delights of a philosopher, in discovering^q the secrets of nature, and knowing the mystery of sciences, exceed the delights of the glutton, the drunkard, the unclean, and of all voluptuous sensualists whatsoever; so excellent is all truth. What then is their delight, who know the God of truth? What would I not give, so that all the uncertain, questionable principles in logic, natural philosophy, metaphysics, and medicine, were but certain in themselves, and to me; and that my dull, obscure notions of them were but quick and clear! O, what then should I not either perform or part with to enjoy a clear and true apprehension of the most true God! How noble a^r faculty of the soul is the understanding! It can compass the earth; it can measure the sun, moon, stars, and heaven; it can foreknow each eclipse to a minute, many years before: yea, but this is the top of all its excellency,

^p It is only by thy soul, and implanted understanding, that God can be beheld and understood.—*Athanas. l. 1. cont. Gentil.* When we speak of seeing God, we must take heed of expecting a proper, immediate sight of his essence, more than the creature is capable of. See what great Camero saith: Scholastici homines acuti quidem, sed in hoc argumento nimis acuti: invisibilis est Deus vel angelis, quibus ad Dei conspectum nulla peccati labes, sola naturæ imbecilitas (creaturæ enim sunt) aditum interclusit.—*Camero, Prælect. de Verbo Dei, cap. 7. p. (operum in fol.) 415.* Neque pugnant ista cum eorum sententia qui beatitudinem humanam in Dei fruitione collocant. Neque enim frui Deo aliud quicquam est quam potentiæ, sapientiæ, bonitatis divinæ fructum percipere quem creaturæ modus et ratio ferre potest. Id vero sanctitas ea animæ est quam diximus, et corporis illa gloriosa immortalitas. Neque diversum est quod Scripturæ docent, in Dei visione nostram felicitatem esse sitam: nam videtur Deus, experiundo quis sit, et qualem se erga nos præstat, &c.—*Camero, ibidem.* Hæc autem adhuc mysteria existimo.

^q Jam vero Nosse quantum ametur, quamque falli nolit humana natura, vel hinc intelligi potest, quod lamentari quisque sana mente mavult, quam lætari in amentia.—*Aug. de Civit. l. 11. c. 37.*

^r Scalig. Exercit. 17. Sect. 3., dicit voluntatem nihil aliud esse quam intellectum extensum, ad habendum et faciendum id quod cognoscit. Vid. D. Makowski Colleg. in disp. 12. vit. Pibonis de Just. Passiva.

it can know God, who is infinite, who made all these ; a little here ; and more, and much more hereafter. O the wisdom and goodness of our blessed Lord ! He hath created the understanding with a natural bias and inclination to truth and its object ; and to the prime truth, as its prime object : and lest we should turn aside to any creature, he hath kept this as his own divine prerogative, not communicable to any creature, viz., to be the prime truth. And though I think not, as ^s some do, that there is so near a close between the understanding and truth, as may produce a proper union or identity ; yet, doubtless, it is no such cold touch or disdainful embrace, as is between these gross, earthly heterogeneous. The true, studious, contemplative man knows this to be true ; who feels as sweet embraces between his intellect and truth, and far more than ever the quickest sense did in possessing its desired object. But the true, studious, contemplative Christian knows it much more ; who sometime hath felt more sweet embraces between his soul and Jesus Christ than all inferior truth can afford. I know some Christians are kept short this way, especially the careless in their watch and walking ; and those that are ignorant or negligent in the daily actings of faith, who look when God casts in joys, while they lie idle, and labour not to fetch them in by believing : but for others, I appeal to the most of them. Christian, dost thou not sometime, when after long gazing heavenward thou hast got a glimpse of Christ, dost thou not seem to have been with Paul in the third heaven, whether in the body or out, and to have seen what is unutterable ; art thou not, with Peter, almost beyond thyself, ready to say, “Master, it is good to be here ?” O that I might ever see what I now see ! Didst thou never look so long upon the Son of God, till thine eyes were dazzled with his astonishing glory ; and did not the splendour of it make all things below seem black and dark to

^s Brook's ‘Union of the Soul and Truth.’ In vita æterna præcipuum et omnis hominis bonum summum est suavissima contemplatio, seu visio Dei, ut nobis paterne faventis. Suave est intelligere favorem Dei paternum ; suavius eum amatum gustare ; et hoc suavius, gustato acquiescere, et contentum esse : omnium vero suavissimum, Scire nos intellectu Dei favore perfrui, et semper fruituros esse.—*Mat. Martinus Cathoi. Fid.* l. 3. c. 9. Beatorum felicitas hæc erit, quod visuri sunt Deum, h. e. intellectus ipsorum quantum in creatum et finitum intellectum cadere potest, divinitatem plene et perfecte cognoscet et contemplantur. Voluntas autem ad Deum cognitum inclinabitur, in eoque tanquam summo bono tranquillissime ; felicissimoque amore acquiescet. Corpora quoque beatorum suas gloriosas quasdam dotes accipient, &c. —*Geor. Calixtus in Epitom. Theo.* p. 66.

thee when thou lookedst down again, especially in thy day of suffering for Christ, when he usually appears most manifestly to his people? Didst thou never see one walking in the midst of the fiery furnace with thee, like to the Son of God? If thou do know him, value him as thy life, and follow on to know him,^t and thou shalt know incomparably more than this; or, if I do but renew thy grief to tell thee what thou once didst feel, but now hast lost, I counsel thee to remember whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works, and be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain;^u and I dare promise thee, because God hath promised, thou shalt see and know that which here thine eye could not see, nor thy understanding conceive. Believe me, Christians, yea, believe God, you that have known most of God in Christ here, it is as nothing to that you shall know; it scarcely, in comparison of that, deserves to be called knowledge. The difference betwixt our knowledge now and our knowledge then, will be as great as that between our fleshly bodies now and our spiritual, glorified bodies then; for as these bodies, so that knowledge must cease, that a more perfect may succeed. Our silly, childish thoughts of God, which now is the highest we can reach to, must give place to a more manly knowledge. All this saith the apostle, “Knowledge shall vanish away; for we know in part, &c. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I thought as a child, I understood as a child, but when I became a man I put away childish things; for now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face: now I know in part, but then I shall know even as also I am known.” (1 Cor. xiii. 8—12.)

Marvel not, therefore, Christian, at the sense of that place of John xvii. 3, ^x how it can be life eternal to know God and his Son Jesus Christ: you must needs know, that to enjoy God

^t Hos. vi. 2, 3.

^u Rev. ii. 5, and iii. 2.

^x Scoti glossa est vera, viz. ut cognoscant te amando et fruendo. Vid. Scutum in 4 senten. distinct. 48. q. 1. p. 256. Vita æterna est cognoscere: vivere est motus delectabilissimus, qui non est sine amore. Delectatio enim est opus amoris, unde in vitâ æternâ est cognitio quæ amor. Intellectus enim quodam naturalissimo amore scire desiderat. Et hoc desiderium est quod in se gestat veritatem. Et qui scire desiderat, veritatem scire desiderat. Scire igitur hoc desiderium, est apprehendere desideratum in desiderio. Unde qui concipit Deum esse charitatem, et finem desiderii, scilicet bonitatem, ille videt quomodo in apprehensione charitatis satiatur desiderium animæ.—*Card. Causanus, Exercitat. l. 10. fol. (mihi) 184.*

and his Christ is eternal life, and the soul's enjoying is in knowing. They that savour only of earth, and consult with flesh, and have no way to try and judge but by sense, and never were acquainted with this knowledge of God, nor tasted how gracious he is, these think it is a poor happiness to know God : let them have health and wealth, and worldly delights, and take you the other. Alas, poor men, they that have made trial of both do not grudge you your delights, nor envy your happiness, but pity your undoing folly, and wish O that you could come near, and taste and try as they have done, and then judge ; then continue in your former mind if you can ! For our parts, we say with that knowing apostle, though the speech may seem presumptuous, "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness ; and we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true ; and we are in him that is true, in his Son Jesus Christ : this is the true God, and eternal Life." (1 John v. 19, 20.) Here one verse contains the sum of most that I have said. The Son of God is come to be our Head and Fountain of life, and so hath given us an understanding, that the soul may be personally qualified and made capable to know him (God) that is true, the prime Truth ; and we are brought so near in this enjoyment that we are in him that is true, not properly by an essential or personal union, but we are in him by being in his Son Jesus Christ. This, that we have mentioned, is the only true God, and so the fittest object for our understanding, which chooseth truth ; and this knowing of him, and being in him, in Christ, is eternal life.

Sect. VII. And, doubtless, the memory will not be idle or useless in this blessed work, if it be but by looking back to help the soul to value its employment. Our knowledge will be enlarged, not diminished ; therefore, the knowledge of things past shall not be taken away : and what is that knowledge, but remembrance ? Doubtless, from that height, the saint can look behind him and before him ; and to compare past with present things, must needs raise, in the blessed soul, an inconceivable esteem and sense of its condition. To stand on that mount, whence we can see the wilderness and Canaan both at once ; to stand in heaven, and look back on earth, and weigh them together in the balance of a comparing sense and judgment, how must it needs transport the soul, and make it cry out, Is this the purchase that cost so dear as the blood of God ? No wonder : O blessed

price, and thrice blessed love, that invented and condescended ! Is this the end of believing ; is this the end of the Spirit's workings ? Have the gales of grace blown me into such a harbour : is it hither that Christ hath enticed my soul ? O blessed way, and thrice blessed end ! Is this the glory which the Scriptures spoke of, and ministers preached of so much ? Why, now I see the Gospel indeed is good tidings, even tidings of peace and good things ; tidings of great joy to all nations.⁷ Is my mourning, my fasting, my sad humblings, my heavy walking, groanings, complainings, come to this ; are all my afflictions, sickness, languishing, troublesome physic, fears of death, come to this ; are all Satan's temptations, the world's scorns and jeers, come to this ; and, now, if there be such a thing as indignation left, how will it here let fly ! O vile nature, that resisted so much, and so long such a blessing : unworthy soul ! Is this the place thou camest so unwillingly towards : was duty wearisome ; was the world too good to lose ? Didst thou stick at leaving all, denying all, and suffering any thing for this : wast thou loath to die to come to this ? O false heart, that had almost betrayed me to eternal flames, and lost me this glory ! O base flesh, that would needs have been pleased, though to the loss of this felicity ! Didst thou make me to question the truth of this glory ; didst thou show me improbabilities, and draw me to distrust the Lord ; didst thou question the truth of that scripture which promised this ? Why, my soul, art thou not now ashamed that ever thou didst question that love that hath brought thee hither ; that thou wast jealous of the faithfulness of thy Lord ; that thou suspectedst his love when thou shouldest only have suspected thyself ; that thou didst not live continually transported with thy Saviour's love ; and that, ever, thou quenchedst a motion of his Spirit ? Art thou not ashamed of all thy hard thoughts of such a God ; of all thy misinterpreting of, and grudging at, those providences, and repining at those ways that have such an end ? Now, thou art sufficiently convinced that the ways thou calledst hard, and the cup thou calledst bitter, were necessary ; that thy Lord hath sweeter ends, and meant thee better than thou wouldst believe ; and that thy Redeemer was saving thee, as well when he crossed thy desires as when he granted them, and as well when he broke thy heart as when he bound it up. O, no thanks to thee, unworthy self, but shame, for this received crown ; but to Jehovah and the Lamb be glory for ever.

⁷ Luke i. 19, and ii. 10 ; Acts xiii. 32.

Thus, as the memory of the wicked will eternally promote their torment, to look back on the pleasures enjoyed, the sin committed, the grace refused, Christ neglected, and time lost ; so will the memory of the saints for ever promote their joys. And as it is said to the wicked, "Remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things ;" so will it be said to the Christian, "Remember that thou in thy life time receivedst thine evils ; but now thou art comforted, and they are tormented."^z And as here the remembrance of former good is the occasion of increasing our grief, "I remembered God, and was troubled ; I called to remembrance my songs in the night ;" (Psal. lxxvii. 3, 6 ;) so there the remembrance of our former sorrows adds life to our joys.

Sect. VIII. But O the full, the near, the sweet enjoyment is that of the affections, love, and joy ; it is near ! for love is of the essence of the soul, and love is the essence of God : "for God is love." How near, therefore, is this blessed closure ! The Spirit's phrase is, "God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." (1 John iv. 8, 16.) The acting of this affection, wheresoever, carrieth much delight along with it, especially when the object appears deserving, and the affection is strong ; but oh ! what will it be when perfect affections shall have the strongest, perfect, incessant acting upon the most perfect object, the ever-blessed God ! Now the poor soul complains, O that I could love Christ more ! but I cannot : alas ! I cannot ; yea, but then thou canst not choose but love him : I had almost said, forbear if thou canst. Now, thou knowest little of his amiableness, and therefore lovest little ; then thine eye will affect thy heart, and the continual viewing of that perfect beauty will keep thee in continual ravishments of love. Now thy salvation is not perfected, nor all the mercies purchased, yet given in ; but when the top-stone is set on, thou shalt, with shouting, cry 'Grace, grace !' Now thy sanctification is imperfect, and thy pardon and ^a justification not so complete as then it ^b shall be ; now thou knowest not what thou enjoyest,

^z Luke xvi. 25.

^a I know it is commonly said that justification hath no degrees, but yet it is taken for several acts, whereof that of Christ absolving and acquitting us at the last judgment, is the most complete justification, as Mr. Burgess, in his last lectures on justification, affirmeth.

^b *Creaturæ rationalis alia beatitudo nec potuit, nec potest esse, nec poterit ; nisi ut agnoscens à quo non solum facta, sed etiam à quo rationalis facta, majorem dilectionem exhibeat bono Creatori, quam sibi. Neque ei esse pos-*

and therefore lovest the less : but when thou knowest much is forgiven, and much bestowed, thou wilt love more. Doth David, after an imperfect deliverance, sing forth his love : “ I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and supplications ? ” (Psal. cxvi. 1.) What think you will he do eternally ; and how will he love the Lord, who hath lifted him up to that glory ? Doth he cry out, “ O how I love thy law ! ” (Psal. cxix. 97.) “ My delight is in the saints on earth, and the excellent.” (Psal. xvi. 3.) How will he say, then, ‘ O how I love the Lord, and the King of saints, in whom is all my delight ! ’ Christians, doth it now stir up your love, to remember all the experiences of his love ; to look back upon a life of mercies ? doth not kindness melt you, and the sunshine of divine goodness warm your frozen hearts ? What will it do, then, when you shall live in love, and have all in him, who is All ? O the high delights of love, of this love ; the content that the heart findeth in it ; the satisfaction it brings along with it ! Surely, love is both work and wages.

And if this were all, what a high favour, that God will give us leave to love him ; that he will vouchsafe to be embraced by such arms, that have embraced lust and sin before him ! but this is not all.^c He returneth love for love ; nay, a thousand times more : as perfect as we shall be, we cannot reach his measure of love ; Christian, thou wilt be then brimful of love ; yet love as much as thou canst, thou shalt be ten thousand times more beloved.^d Dost thou think thou canst overlove him ? What, love more than love itself ! were the arms of the Son of God open upon the cross, and an open passage made to his heart by the spear, and will not arms and heart be open to thee in glory ; did he begin to love before thou lovedst, and will not

sit, ullatenus ratio, nisi ei possit Creatoris inesse dilectio. Quia nec est alia quæ vera sit sapientia, vel intelligentia creaturæ rationalis, nisi dilectio Creatoris ; in qua tanto magis minusve est dilectio sui, quanto magis minusve dilectionem exhibet Creatori.—*Fulg.* lib. 1. *ad Monim.* c. 18.

^c Dum Deum sibi sufficere cogitas, quid aliud cogitas nisi Deum amare in se quicquid amat aliud à se ? et rationem amandi res, non esse earum, sed sui ipsius bonitatem. Amabit aliquid extra se : et peregrinabitur longius à se si amorem ejus excitari concesseris ab eo quod externum illi est. Amat ea quæ sunt extra se, sed amat ea in se : qui seipso contentus nunquam commoratur, nunquam peregrinatur extra se.—*Gibieuf.* lib. 2. c. xxvii. p. 483. s. 7.

^d John xi. 33, 35, 36 ; Cant. i. 5 ; v. 2 ; vi. 9, and iv. 9, 10, &c. Ibi nec minor erit laudatione nostra dilectio, nec inferior dilectione laudatio ; erit enim plena nostra laudatio, quia tune in nobis erit Dei proximique perfecta dilectio. Tunc laudabimus et habebimus ; tunc habebimus et amabimus ; tunc satiabimur cum delectatione, et delectabimur cum satietate.—*Fulgent.* *Epist.* iv. *ad Prob.* c. 7, 8.

he continue now: did he love thee, an enemy; thee, a sinner; thee, who even loathedst thyself: and own thee when thou didst disclaim thyself; and will he not now immeasurably love thee, a son; thee, a perfect saint; thee, who returnest some love for love: thou wast wont injuriously to question his love; doubt of it now if thou canst. As the pains of hell will convince the rebellious sinner of God's wrath, who would never before believe it; so the joys of heaven will convince thee thoroughly of that love which thou wouldst so hardly be persuaded of. He that in love wept over the old Jerusalem near her ruins; with what love will he rejoice over the New Jerusalem in her glory? O, methinks I see him groaning and weeping over dead Lazarus, till he forced the Jews that stood by to say, "Behold how he loved him!" Will he not then much more, by rejoicing over us, make all (even the damned if they see it) to say, Behold how he loveth them? Is his spouse, while black, yet comely: is she his love, his dove, his undefiled; doth she ravish his heart with one of her eyes; is her love better than wine? O, believing soul, study a little, and tell me, what is the harvest which these first-fruits foretell; and the love which these are but the earnest of? Here! O here is the heaven of heaven! this is the saint's fruition of God; in these sweet, mutual, constant actings and embracements of love, doth it consist. To love, and be beloved: "These are the everlasting arms that are underneath." (Deut. xxxiii. 27.) "His left hand is under their heads, and with his right hand doth he embrace them." (Cant. ii. 6.) Reader, stop here, and think awhile what a state this is. Is it a small thing in thine eyes to be beloved of God; to be the son, the spouse, the love, the delight of the King of glory? Christian, believe this, and think on it; thou shalt be eternally embraced in the arms of that love, which was from everlasting, and will extend to everlasting: of that love, which brought the Son of God's love from heaven to earth, from earth to the cross, from the cross to the grave, from the grave to glory: that love, which was weary, hungry, tempted, scorned, scourged, buffeted, spit upon, crucified, pierced; which did fast, pray, teach, heal, weep, sweat, bleed, die: that love will eternally embrace them. When perfect, created love, and most perfect, uncreated love meet together, O the blessed meeting! It will not be like Joseph and his brethren, who lay upon one another's necks weeping; it will break forth into a pure joy, and not such a mixture of joy and sorrow as their weeping

argued ; it will be loving and rejoicing, not loving and sorrowing : yet will it make Pharaoh's (Satan's) court to ring with the news, that Joseph's brethren are come ; that the saints are arrived safe at the bosom of Christ, out of the reach of hell for ever. Neither is there any such love as David's and Jonathan's ; shutting-up in sorrows, and breathing out its last into sad lamentations for a forced separation : no, Christ is the powerful, attractive, the effectual Loadstone, who draws to it all like itself. "All that the Father hath given him, shall come unto him ; even the lover, as well as the love, doth he draw ; and they that come unto him, he will in nowise cast out." (John vi. 37—39.) For know this, believer, to thy everlasting comfort, that if these arms have once embraced thee, neither sin nor hell can get thee thence for ever :^e the sanctuary is inviolable, and the rock impregnable, whither thou art fled, and thou art safely locked up to all eternity. Thou hast not now to deal with an inconstant creature, but with him, with whom is no varying nor shadow of change, even the immutable God. If thy happiness were in thine own hand, as Adam's, there were yet fear ; but it is in the keeping of a faithful Creator. Christ hath not bought thee so dear, to trust thee with thyself any more. His love to thee will not be as thine was on earth to him, seldom and cold, up and down, mixed, (as agueish bodies,) with burning and quaking, with a good day and a bad : no, Christian, he that would not be discouraged by thine enmity, by thy loathsome, hateful nature, by all thy unwillingness, unkind neglects, and churlish resistances ; he that would neither cease nor abate his love for all these, can he cease to love thee, when he hath made thee truly lovely ? He that keepeth thee so constant in thy love to him, that thou canst challenge "tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, or sword, to separate thy love from Christ if they can." (Rom. viii. 35.) How much more will himself be constant ! Indeed, he that produced these mutual, embracing affections, will also produce such a mutual constancy in both, that thou mayest confidently be persuaded, as Paul was before thee, "that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in

^e Prima erat perseverantiæ potestas, Bonum posse non deserere. Novissima erit felicitas perseverantiæ, Bonum non posse deserere.—*Aug. de Corr. et Grat.* cap. 9.

Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. viii. 38, 39.) And now are we not left in the apostles' admiration? What shall we say to these things? Infinite love must needs be a mystery to a finite capacity. No wonder if angels desire to pry into this mystery:^f and if it be the study of the saints here, to know the height, and breadth, and length, and depth, of this love, though it passeth knowledge: this is the saint's rest in the fruition of God by love.

Sect. X. Lastly: The affection of joy hath not the least share in this fruition. It is that which all the rest lead to, and conclude in; even the inconceivable complacency which the blessed feel in their seeing, knowing, loving, and being beloved of God. The delight of the senses here, cannot be known by expressions, as they are felt; how much less this joy! This is the "white stone, which none knoweth but he that receiveth;"^g and if there be any "joy which the stranger meddleth not with," then surely this, above all, is it. All Christ's ways of mercy tend to and end in the saints' joys. He wept, sorrowed, suffered, that they might rejoice; he sendeth the Spirit to be their comforter; he multiplieth promises, he discovers their future happiness; that their "joy may be full:" he aboundeth to them in the mercies of all sorts; he maketh them lie down in green pastures, and leadeth them by the still waters; yea, openeth to them the fountain of living waters; that their joy may be full: that they may thirst no more; and that it may spring up in them to everlasting life.^h Yea, he causeth them to suffer, that he may cause them to rejoice; and chasteneth them, that he may give them rest; and maketh them, as he did himself, "to drink of the brook in the way, that they may lift up the head." (Psal. cx. 7.) And lest, after all this, they should neglect their own comforts, he maketh it their duty, and presseth it on them, commanding them to "rejoice in him always, and again to rejoice." And he never brings them into so low a condition, wherein he leaves them not more cause of joy than of sorrow. And hath the Lord such a care of our comfort here; where, the Bridegroom being from us, we must mourn?ⁱ Oh! what will that joy be, where the soul being perfectly prepared for joy,

^f 1 Pet. i. 12; Eph. iii. 18.

^g Rev. ii. 17; Prov. xiv. 10.

^h John xv. 11; xvi. 24, and xvii. 13; Psal. xciv. 12, 13; 1 Thess. v. 16; Psal. xxxii. 11, and xxxiii. 1, &c.

ⁱ Matt. ix. 15.

and joy prepared by Christ for the soul, it shall be our work, our business, eternally to rejoice ! And it seems the saints' joy shall be greater than the damned's torment ; for their torment is the torment of creatures, prepared for the devil and his angels :^k but our joy is the joy of our Lord ; even our Lord's own joy shall we enter : " and the same glory which the Father giveth him, doth the Son give to them ;" (John xvii. 22 ;) " and to sit with him in his throne, even as he is set down in his Father's throne." (Rev. iii. 21.) What sayest thou to all this, O thou sad and drooping soul ? Thou that now spendest thy days in sorrow, and thy breath in sighings, and turnest all thy voice into groanings : who knowest no garments but sackcloth, no food but the bread and water of affliction ; who minglest thy bread with tears, and drinkest the tears which thou weapest ; what sayest thou to this great change ; from all sorrow to more than all joy ? Thou poor soul, who prayest for joy, waitest for joy, complainest for want of joy, longest for joy ; why, then, thou shalt have full joy, as much as thou canst hold, and more than ever thou thoughtest on, or thy heart desired. And, in the meantime, walk carefully, watch constantly, and then let God measure out thy times and degrees of joy. It may be he keeps them till thou have more need : thou mayest better lose thy comfort than thy safety ; if thou shouldst die full of fears and sorrows, it will be but a moment, and they are all gone, and conclude in joy inconceivable. As the joy of the hypocrite, so the fears of the upright are but for a moment. And as their hopes are but golden dreams, which when death awakes, do then all perish, and their hopes die with them ; so the saints' doubts and fears are but terrible dreams, which, when they die, do all vanish ; and they awake in joyful glory. For " God's anger endureth but a moment, but in his favour is life : weeping may endure for a night, darkness and sadness go together, but joy cometh in the morning." (Psal. xxx. 5.) O blessed morning, thrice blessed morning ! poor, humble, drooping soul, how would it fill thee with joy now, if a voice from heaven should tell thee of the love of God ; of the pardon of thy sins ; and should assure thee of thy part in these joys ? O, what then will thy joys be, when thy actual possession shall convince thee of thy title, and thou shalt be in heaven before thou art well aware ; when the angels shall bring thee to Christ, and when Christ

^k Matt. xxv.

shall, as it were, take thee by the hand, and lead thee into thy purchased possession, and bid thee welcome to thy rest, and present thee unspotted before his Father, and give thee thy place about his throne ! Poor sinner, what sayest thou to such a day as this ? wilt thou not be almost ready to draw back, and to say, What I, Lord, I, the unworthy neglecter of thy grace ! I, the unworthy disesteemer of thy blood, and slighter of thy love ! must I have this glory ? “ Make me a hired servant, I am no more worthy to be called a son : ” but love will have it so ; therefore must thou enter into his joy.

Sect. XI. And it is not thy joy only ; it is a mutual joy as well as a mutual love : is there such joy in heaven at thy conversion, and will there be none at thy glorification : will not the angels welcome thee thither, and congratulate thy safe arrival ? yea, it is the joy of Jesus Christ ; for now he hath the end of his undertaking, labour, suffering, dying, when we have our joys ; when he is “ glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe.”¹ We are his seed, and the fruit of his soul’s travail, which, when he seeth, he will be satisfied. (Isa. liii. 10, 11.) This is Christ’s harvest, when he shall reap the fruit of his labours ; and when he seeth it was not in vain, it will not repent him concerning his sufferings ; but he will rejoice over his purchased inheritance, and his people shall rejoice in him.

Yea, the Father himself puts on joy, too, in our joy : as we grieve his Spirit, and weary him with our iniquities, so he is rejoiced in our good.^m O how quickly here he doth espy a returning prodigal, even afar off : how doth he run and meet him ; and with what compassion falls he on his neck, and kisseth him ; and puts on him the best robe, and a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet, and spares not to kill the fatted calf, that they may eat and be merry ! this is indeed a happy meeting ; but nothing to the embracements and the joy of that last and great meeting.

Yea, more yet ; as God doth mutually love and joy, so he makes this his rest, as it is our rest. Did he appoint a Sabbath,

¹ 2 Thess. i. 10.

^m Quomodo passiones non esse in Deo, et tamen delectationem, gaudium et amorem esse in Deo scholastici asserunt. Vid. in Aquin. cont. Gentil. l. 1, q. 90—92, et sum. 1, &c. Sed hæc nobis incomprehensibilia et incognita existimo. Nam ut Aristot. in 2 Metaph. asserit, “ Intellectus noster sic se habet ad prima entium quæ sunt manifestissima in natura, sicut oculus vespertilionis ad solem.” Referente Thoma. cont. Gentil. l. i. c. 3. ubi plura de hac re videre est.

because he rested from six days' work, and saw all good, and very good? What an eternal sabbatism, then, when the work of redemption, sanctification, preservation, glorification, are all finished, and his work more perfect than ever, and very good indeed! So the Lord is said to rejoice, and to take pleasure in his people. (Psalm cxlvii. 11, and cxlix. 4.) O, Christians, write these words in letters of gold; "The Lord thy God in the midst of thee, is mighty: he will save: he will rejoice over thee with joy: he will rest in his love: he will joy over thee with singing." (Zeph. iii. 17.) O, well may we then rejoice in our God with joy, and rest in our love, and joy in him with singing. (See Isa. lxxv. 18, 19.)

And now look back upon all this; I say to thee, as the angel to John, "What hast thou seen?" or if yet thou perceive not, draw nearer, come up higher, come and see: dost thou fear thou hast been all this while in a dream? Why, these are the true sayings of God. Dost thou fear, as the disciples, that thou hast seen but a ghost, instead of Christ;^a a shadow instead of rest? Why, come near and feel: a shadow contains not those substantial blessings, nor rests upon the basis of such a foundation truth, and sure word of promise, as you have seen these do. Go thy way now, and tell the disciples, and tell the humble, drooping souls thou meetest with, that thou hast, in this glass, seen heaven; that the Lord indeed is risen, and hath here appeared to thee; and behold he is gone before us into rest; and that he is now preparing a place for them, and will come again, and take them to himself, that where he is, there they may be also. (John xiv. 3.) Yea, go thy ways, and tell the unbelieving world, and tell thy unbelieving heart, if they ask what is the hope thou boastest of, and what will be thy rest. Why, this is my beloved, and my friend, and this is my hope and my rest. Call them forth, and say, "Behold what love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be the sons of God;" (1 John iii. 1;) and that we should enter into our Lord's own rest.

Sect. XII. But, alas! my fearful heart dare scarce proceed: methinks I hear the Almighty's voice saying to me, as to Elihu, "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?" (Job xxxviii. 2.)

But pardon, O Lord, thy servant's sin: I have not pried into unrevealed things, nor, with audacious wits, curiously searched into thy counsels; but, indeed, I have dishonoured thy holiness,

^a Luke xxiv. 37—39; Mark xvi. 7.

wronged thine excellency, disgraced thy saints' glory, by my own exceeding, disproportionable portraying. I will bewail, from my heart, that my conceivings fall so short, my apprehensions are so dull, my thoughts so mean, my affections so stupid, and my expressions so low and unbeseeming such a glory. But I have only heard by the hearing of the ear : O let thy servant see thee, and possess these joys ; and then I shall have more suitable conceivings, and shall give thee fuller glory, and abhor my present self, and disclaim and renounce all these imperfections. "I have now uttered that I understood not ; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Yet I believed, and therefore spake." (Job xlii. 3.) Remember with whom thou hast to do : what canst thou expect from dust, but levity ; or from corruption, but defilement ? Our foul hands will leave, where they touch, the marks of their uncleanness ; and most on those things that are most pure. "I know thou wilt be sanctified in them that come nigh thee, and before all the people thou wilt be glorified." (Lev. x. 2, 3 ; Numb. xx. 12 ; Deut. xxxii. 51.) And if thy jealousy excluded from that land of rest, thy servants, Moses and Aaron, because they sanctified thee not in the midst of Israel, what then may I expect ? But, though the weakness and irreverence be the fruit of my own corruption, yet the fire is from thine altar, and the work of thy commanding. I looked not into thine ark, nor put forth my hand unto it without thee. O, therefore, wash away these stains also in the blood of the Lamb : and let not jealousy burn us up ; lest thou affright the people away from thee, and make them, in their discouragement, to cry out, "How shall the ark of God come to us ? Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God ? Who shall approach and dwell with the consuming fire ?" (2 Sam. vi. 9 ; 1 Sam. vi. 20 ; Matt. xxvi. 14.) Imperfect, or none, must be thy service here. Oh ! take thy Son's excuse, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

CHAP. V.

The four great Preparatives to our Rest.

SECT. I. Having thus opened you a window toward the temple, and showed you a small glimpse of the back parts of that resemblance of the saint's rest which I had seen in the Gospel-glass, it follows, that we proceed to view a little the

adjuncts and blessed properties of this rest ; but, alas ! this little which I have seen makes me cry out, with the prophet Isaiah, (chap. vi. 5—7,) “Wo is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips ; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts !” Yet, if he will send and touch my lips with a coal from the altar of his Son, and say, Thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged, I shall then speak boldly ; and if he ask, Whom shall I send, I shall gladly answer, “Here am I, send me.” (Ver. 8.) And why doth my trembling heart draw back ? Surely, the Lord is not now so terrible and inaccessible, nor the passage of paradise so blocked up, as when the law and curse reigned. Wherefore, finding, beloved Christians, “that the new and living way is consecrated for us, through the veil, the flesh of Christ, by which we may with boldness enter into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus, I shall draw near with the fuller assurance.” (Heb. x. 20—22.) And finding the flaming sword removed, shall look again into the paradise of our God : and because I know that this is not forbidden fruit, and, withal, that it is good for food, and pleasant to the spiritual eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one truly wise and happy, (Gen. iii. 6,) I shall take, through the assistance of the Spirit, and eat thereof myself, and give to you, according to my power, that you may eat. For you, Christians, is this food prepared, this wine broached, this fountain opened ; and the message my Master sends you is this hearty welcome, which you shall have in his own words, “Eat, O friends ; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.” (Can. v. 1.) And, surely, it is neither manners nor wisdom for you or me, to draw back or to demur upon such an invitation.

And, first, let us consider of the eminent antecedents, the great preparations ; that notable introduction to this rest ; for the porch of this temple is exceeding glorious, and the gate of it is called beautiful : and here offer themselves to this distinct observation, these four things, as the four corners of this porch.

1. The most glorious coming and appearing of the Son of God.
2. His powerful and wonderful raising of our bodies from the dust, and uniting them again with the soul.
3. His public and solemn proceedings in their judgment, where they shall be justified and acquitted before all the world.
4. His solemn celebration of their coronation, and his enthronizing of them in their glory. Follow but this fourfold

stream unto the head, and it will bring you just to the garden of Eden.

Sect. I. And well may the coming of Christ be reckoned into his people's glory, and enumerated with those ingredients that compound this precious antidote of rest: for to this end it is intended; and to this end it is of apparent necessity. For his people's sake he sanctified himself to his office: for their sake he came into the world, suffered, died, rose, ascended: and for their sake it is that he will return. Whether his own exaltation, or theirs, were his^o primary intention, is a question, though of seeming usefulness, yet, so unresolved, for aught I have found, in Scripture, that I dare not scan it, for fear of pressing into the divine secrets, and approaching too near the inaccessible light. I find Scripture mentioning both ends distinctly and conjunctly, but not comparatively. This is most clear, that to this end will Christ come again to receive his people to himself, "that where he is, they may be also." (John xiv. 3.) The Bridegroom's departure was not upon divorce; he did not leave us with a purpose to return no more: he hath left pledges enough to assure us; we have his word in pawn, his many promises, his sacraments, which show forth his death till he come, and his Spirit to direct, sanctify, and comfort, till he return. We have frequent tokens of love from him, to show us he forgets not his purpose, nor us. We behold the forerunners of his coming, foretold by himself, daily come to pass. We see the fig-tree put forth her branches, and therefore know the summer is nigh. We see the fields white unto harvest: and though the riotous world say, "Our Lord will be long a-coming," yet let the saints lift up their heads, for their redemption draweth nigh. Alas! fellow-Christians, what should we do, if our Lord should not return! What a case are we here left in! What! leave us among wolves, and in the lion's den, among a generation of serpents, and here forget us! Did he buy us so dear, and then cast us off so: to leave us sinning, suffering, groaning, dying daily, and come no more to us? It cannot be; never fear it: it cannot be. This is like our unkind dealing with Christ, who, when we feel ourselves warm in the world, care not for coming at him; but this is not like Christ's dealing with us. He that

^o Of the man Christ, next the glory of the Godhead. Rom. xiv. 9; 2 Thess. i. 10; Tit. ii. 14.

^p Matt. xxiv. 32, 48, and x. 16; Psal. lvii. 4; Matt. iii. 7. The ancient Christians still worshipped in the churches with their faces eastward, to

would come to suffer, will surely come to triumph ; and he that would come to purchase, will surely come to possess. Alas ! where else were all our hopes ? What were become of our faith, our prayers, our tears, and our waiting ? What were all the patience of the saints worth to them ? Were we not left of all men most miserable ? Christians, hath Christ made us forsake all the world, and be forsaken of all the world ; to hate all, and to be hated of all ; and all this for him, that we may have him instead of all ? And will he, think you, after all this, forget us, and forsake us himself ? Far be such a thought from our hearts. But why stayed he not with his people, while he was here ? Why must not the Comforter be sent ? Was not the work all on earth done ? Must he not receive the recompense of reward, and enter into his glory ? Must he not take possession in our behalf ? Must he not go to prepare a place for us ? Must he not intercede with the Father ; and plead his sufferings, and be filled with the Spirit, to send it forth ; and receive authority, to subdue his enemies ? Our abode here is short ; if he had stayed on earth, what would it have been to enjoy him for a few days, and then die ? But he hath more in heaven to dwell among ; even the spirits of the just of many generations, there made perfect. Besides, he will have us live by faith, and not by sight. O fellow-Christians, what a day will that be, when we, who have been kept prisoners by sin, by sinners, by the grave, shall be fetched out by the Lord himself ; when Christ shall come from heaven to plead with his enemies, and set his captives free ! It will not be such a coming as his first was, in meanness, and poverty, and contempt : he will not come to be spit upon, and buffeted, and scorned, and crucified again : he will not come, O careless world, to be slighted and neglected by you any more. And yet that coming, which was necessarily in infirmity and reproach for our sakes, wanted not its glory. If the angels of heaven must be the messengers of that coming, as being "tidings of joy to all people :"^r and the heavenly host must go before, or accompany the celebration of his nativity, and must praise God with that solemnity, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men ;" O, then, with what shoutings will angels and saints at

signify their continual expectation of Christ's coming, who they thought should appear in the east ; from that of Matt. xx. 27 ; John xvi. 7, and xvii. 4 ; Heb. xii. 2 ; Luke xxiv. 26 ; John xiv. 3 ; Heb. vii. 25, 26 ; Gal. iii. 14 ; Eph. iv. 8, 9.

^r Luke ii. 22.

that day proclaim, "Glory to God, and peace and good will towards men!" If the stars of heaven must lead men from remote parts of the world to come to worship a child in a manger; how will the glory of his next appearing constrain all the world to acknowledge his sovereignty? If the King of Israel, riding on an ass, made his entry into Jerusalem with hosannahs, "Blessed be the King that comes in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest;"^s O with what proclamations of blessings, peace, and glory, will he come toward the New Jerusalem! If, when he was in the form of a servant, they cry out, "What manner of man is this, that both wind and sea obey him?"^t what will they say when they shall see him coming in his glory, and the heavens and the earth obey him! "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory."^u O Christians, it was comfortable to you to hear from him, to believe in him, and hope for him. What will it be to see him? The promise of his coming and our deliverance was comfortable. What will it be thus to see him, with all the glorious attendance of angels, come in person to deliver us?^x "The mighty God, the Lord hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he might judge his people. Gather my saints together to me, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice; and the heavens shall declare his righteousness; for God is Judge himself." Selah. (Psalm l. 1—6.) This coming of Christ is frequently mentioned

^s Luke xix. 33.

^t Matt. viii. 27.

^u Mark iv. 41, and xxiv. 30.

^x Stoicis constans opinio est quo consumpto humore, mundus hic omnis ignescet. Et Epicureis de elementorum conflagratione; et mundi ruina, eadem ipsa sententia est. Loquitur Plato partes orbis nunc inundare, nunc alternis vicibus ardescere. Et cum ipsum mundum perpetuum et insolubilem diceret esse fabricatum; addit tamen ipsi artifici Deo soli et solubilem esse et mortalem. Ita nihil mirum est, si ista moles ab eo quo extracta est destruat. — *Minut. Felix. Octu. p. (mihi) 394.* Cum tempus advenerit quo se mundus renovaturus, &c., omni flagrante materia uno igne, quicquid nunc ex disposito lucet ardebit. Nos quoque felices animæ et æterna sortitiæ, cum Deo visum erit iterum ista moliri, &c. Felicem filium tuum, Marcia, qui ista (mortuus) jam novit. — *Senec. Consol. ad Marciam,*

in the prophets, as the great support of his people's spirits till then. And whenever the apostles would quicken to duty, or comfort, and encourage to patient waiting, they usually do it by mentioning Christ's coming. Why, then, do we not use more this cordial consideration, whenever we want support and comfort? To think and speak of that day with horror, doth well besee the impenitent sinner, but ill the believing saint. Such may be the voice of a believer, but it is not the voice of faith. Christians, what do we believe, and hope, and wait for, but to see that day! This is Paul's encouragement to moderation, to "rejoicing in the Lord always; The Lord is at hand." (Phil. iv. 4, 5.) It is "to all them that love his appearing, that the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give the crown of righteousness at that day." (2 Tim. iv. 8.) Dost thou so long to have him come into thy soul with comfort and life, and takest thyself but for a forlorn orphan, while he seemeth absent? And dost thou not much more long for that coming which shall perfect thy life, and joy, and glory? Dost thou so rejoice after some short and slender enjoyment of him in thy heart? Oh! how wilt thou then rejoice! How full of joy was that blessed martyr, Mr. Glover, with the discovery of Christ to his soul, after long doubting and waiting in sorrows! So that he cries out, 'He is come! he is come!' If thou have but a dear friend returned, that hath been far and long absent; how do all run out to meet him with joy! Oh! saith the child, 'My father is come!' saith the wife, 'My husband is come!' And shall not we, when we behold our Lord in his majesty returning, cry out, 'He is come! He is come!' Shall the wicked, with inconceivable horror, behold him, and^y cry out, Oh! yonder is he whose blood we neglected, whose grace we resisted, whose counsels we refused, whose government we cast off! And shall not then the saints, with inconceivable gladness, cry out, 'Oh! yonder is he whose blood redeemed us, whose Spirit cleansed us, whose law did govern us! Yonder comes he in whom we trusted, and now we see he hath not deceived our trust; he for whom we long waited, and now we see we have not waited in vain! O cursed corruption, that would have had us turn to the world, and present things, and give up our hopes, and say, 'Why should we wait for the Lord any longer?' Now we see, that "blessed are all they that wait for him." Believe it, fellow-Christians, this day is not far off. "For yet a little

^y That the sight of Christ in glory will be no blessedness to the damned, *vid. Scotum in 4 Senten. Dist. xlviii. q. 1, p. 256. contra Thom.*

while, and he that comes will come, and will not tarry." And though the unbelieving world, and the unbelief of thy heart, may say, as those atheistical scoffers, "Where is the promise of his coming? Do not all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation?" Yet, let us know, "the Lord is not slack of his promise, as some men count slackness: one day with him is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." (2 Pet. iii. 3, 4, 8, 9.) I have thought on it many a time, as a small emblem of that day, when I have seen a prevailing army drawing towards the towns and castles of the enemy. Oh! with what glad hearts do all the poor prisoners within, hear the news, and behold their approach! How do they run up to their prison windows, and thence behold their friends with joy! How glad are they at the roaring report of that cannon, which is the enemy's terror! How do they clap each other on the back, and cry, 'Deliverance, deliverance!' While, in the mean time, the late insulting, scorning, cruel enemies begin to speak them fair, and beg their favour; but all in vain, for they are not at the disposal of prisoners, but of the general. Their fair usage may make their conditions somewhat the more easy, but yet they are used as enemies still. (Matt. xxiv. 27.) Oh! when the conquering lion of the tribe of Judah shall appear with all the hosts of heaven: when he shall surprise the careless world, as a thief in the night; when as the lightning, which appeareth in the east, and shineth even to the west, so shall they behold him coming: what a change will the sight of this appearance work, both with the world, and with the saints! Now, poor deluded world, where is your mirth and your jollity? Now, where is your wealth and your glory? Where is that profane and careless heart, that slighted Christ and his Spirit, and withstood all the offers of grace? Now, where is that tongue that mocked the saints, and jeered the holy ways of God, and made merry with his people's imperfections, and their own slanders? What! was it not you? Deny it if you can. Your heart condemns you, and "God is greater than your heart, and will condemn you much more." (1 John iii. 20, 21.) Even, when you say, "Peace and safety, then destruction cometh upon you, as travail upon a woman with child; and you shall not escape." (1 Thess. v. 3.) Perhaps, if you had known just the day and hour when the Son of Man would have come, then you would have been found praying, or the like; but you should have watched, and been ready, because you know not the hour. But for that

faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord when he comes shall find so doing; "O, blessed is that servant: verily I say unto you (for Christ hath said it), he shall make him ruler over all his goods." (Matt. xxiv. 42—47.) "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, he shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." (1 Pet. v. 4.) O, how should it then be the character of a Christian, "to wait for the Son of God from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come!" (1 Thess. i. 10.) And with all faithful diligence, to prepare to meet our Lord with joy. And seeing his coming is on purpose "to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe," (2 Thess. i. 10,) O, what thought should glad our hearts more than the thought of that day! A little while, indeed, we have not "seen him, but yet a little while, and we shall see him." (John xiv. 18.) For he hath said, "I will not leave you comfortless, but will come unto you." We were comfortless, should he not come. And while we daily gaze and look up to heaven after him, let us remember what the angel said, "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come, in like manner, as ye have seen him go into heaven." (Acts i. 10.) While he is now out of sight, it is a sword to our souls, while they daily ask us, "Where is your God?" (Psal. xlii.) But then we shall be able to answer our enemies; "See, O proud sinners, yonder is our Lord." O now, Christians, should we not put up that petition heartily, "Let thy kingdom come; for the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let every Christian that heareth and readeth, say, Come," and our Lord himself saith, "Surely I come quickly, amen; even so, come, Lord Jesus." (Rev. xxii. 17, 20.)

Sect. II. The second stream that leadeth to paradise, is that great work of Jesus Christ, in raising our bodies from the dust, uniting them again unto the soul.^z A wonderful effect of infi-

^z Many heathens believe a resurrection, as Zoroaster, and Theopompus, and Plato. And the stoics' opinion was, that the world would be dissolved by fire or water, and all things brought to a better state, or to the first golden age again. Read Seneca, *Natural. Quæst.* l. iii. c. 26—30. *Utrumque (dilu-vium et conflagratio) cum Deo visum est ordiri meliora, vetera finire: cap. 27. Omne ex integro animal generabitur; dabiturque terris homo inscius scelerum et melioribus auspiciis natus: cap. 30. Optima et noxa carentia expectant nos, si ex hac aliquando fœce in illud evademus sublime et excelsum; tranquillitas animi et expulsis erroribus absoluta libertas.—Senec. Epist. l. ii. Ep. 75. Aspice nunc ad ipsa quoque exempla divinæ potestatis: lux moritur in noctem et tenebris usque quaque sepelitur. Funestatur mundi honor: omnis substantia denigratur; sordent, silent, stupent cuncta; ubique just-*

nite power and love. Yea, wonderful indeed, saith unbelief, if it be true. What, saith the atheist and sadducee, shall all these scattered bones and dust become a man? A man drowned in the sea is eaten by fishes, and they by men again, and these men by worms; what is become of the body of that first man; shall it rise again? Thou fool (for so Paul calls thee), dost thou dispute against the power of the Almighty: wilt thou pose him with this sophistry: dost thou object difficulties to the infinite strength? Thou blind mole; thou silly worm; thou little piece of creeping, breathing clay; thou dust; thou nothing: knowest thou who it is, whose power thou dost question? If thou shouldst see him, thou wouldst presently die. If he should come and dispute his cause with thee, couldst thou bear it: or if thou shouldst hear his voice, couldst thou endure? But come thy way, let me take thee by the hand, and do thou a little follow me; and let me, with reverence, as Elihu, plead

tium est, quies rerum; ita lux amissa lugetur. Et tamen rursus cum suo cultu, cum dote, cum sole, eadem et integra, et tota universo orbi reviviscit, interficiens mortem suam noctem; rescindens sepulturam suam, tenebras; hæres sibimet existens, donec nox reviviscat cum suo et illa suggestu; redacenduntur enim et stellarum radii, quos matutina succensio extinxerat. Reducuntur et siderum absentia, quas temporalis distinctio exemerat. Redornantur et specula lunæ, quæ menstruus numerus adtriverat. Revolvuntur hyemes et æstates et verna, et autumnæ, cum suis viribus, moribus, fructibus.—*Tertul. de Resur. c. xii. p. 409.* Dic mihi, philosophe, quid plene cognoscis? puto non auderet te dicere quod parvulam vel minimam creaturam. Scio quod non perfecte cognoscis minimum atomum in sole; nec minimum pulverem terræ: nec minimam guttam aquæ. In omni namque corpusculo, infinitæ figuræ lineares, superficiales et corporales, diversæ numero, quantitate, et qualitate, et specie continentur. Quare etiam correspondentur conclusiones geometricæ infinitæ etiam sese ordinabiliter consequentes, ita quod posterior sciri non potest nisi per priorem. In omni quoque corpuscula infinitæ species numerorum, et infinitæ conclusiones. Arithmeticæ continentur, &c. Harum autem conclusionum infinitarum demonstrative scibilium quod scis? &c.—*Bradwardin. de Causâ Dei, l. 1. c. i. corol. 32.* Mira ratio! de fraudatrice, servatrix: ut reddat, intercipit: ut custodiat, perdit: ut integret, vitiat; ut etiam ampliet, prius decoquit. Siquidem uberiora et cultiora restituit quam exterminavit. Re verâ fœnore, interitu, et injuria, usura, et lucro damno, semel dixerim universa conditio recidiva est. Quodcunque convenis, fuit; quodcunque amiseris, nihil non iterum est; omnia in statum redeunt, quem abscesserint; omnia incipiunt, cum desierint: Ideo finiuntur, ut fiant; Nihil deperit nisi ad salutem. Totus igitur hic ordo revolubilis rerum, testatio est resurrectionis mortuorum. Operibus eam præscripsit Deus, antequam literis. Præmisit tibi naturam magistratam, submissurus et prophetiam, quo facilius credas prophetiæ, discipulus naturæ; quo statim admittas cum audieris, quod ubique jam videris; nec dubites Deum carnis etiam resuscitorem, quem omnium noris restitutorem.—*Tertul. ubi supra.* Read on further much of these excellent sayings there in him, which are so savoury to me, that I could not but take some of them.

for God ; and for that power whereby I hope to arise. Seest thou this great, massy body of the earth : what beareth it, and upon what foundation doth it stand ? Seest thou this vast ocean of waters : what limits them, and why do they not overflow and drown the earth : whence is that constant ebbing and flowing of her tides : wilt thou say from the moon, or other planets : and whence have they that power of effective influence ; must thou not come to a cause of causes, that can do all things ? And doth not reason require thee, to conceive of that cause as a perfect intelligence, and voluntary agent, and not such a blind worker and empty notion as that nothing is, which thou callest nature ? Look upward ; seest thou that glorious body of light, the sun : how many times bigger it is than all the earth ; and yet how many thousand miles doth it run in one minute of an hour, and that without weariness, or failing a moment ? What thinkest thou ; is not that power able to effect thy resurrection, which doth all this : dost thou not see as great works as a resurrection every day before thine eyes, but that the commonness makes thee not admire them ? Read but Job, xxxvii. to xli., and take heed of disputing against God again, or ever. Knowest thou not, that with him all things are possible ; can he make a camel go through the eye of a needle ; can he make such a blind sinner as thou to see, and such a proud heart as thine to stoop, and such an earthly mind as thine, heavenly ; and subdue all that thy fleshly, foolish wisdom ? And is not this as great a work, as to raise thee from the dust. wast thou any more unlikely to be, when thou wast nothing, than thou shalt be when thou art dust : is it not as easy to raise the dead, as to make heaven and earth, and all of nothing ? But if thou be unpersuadable, all I say to thee more is, as the prophet to the prince of Samaria (2 Kings vii. 20), “Thou shalt see that day with thine eyes,” but little to thy comfort ; for that which is the day of relief to the saints, shall be a day of revenge on thee : there is a rest prepared, but thou canst not “enter in because of unbelief.” (Heb. iii. 19.) But for thee, O believing soul, never think to comprehend, in the narrow capacity of thy shallow brain, the counsels and ways of thy Maker ; any more than thou canst contain in thy fist the vast ocean. He never intended thee such a capacity, when he made thee, and gave thee that measure thou hast, any more than he intended to enable that worm, or this post, or stone, fully to know thee. Therefore, when he speaks, dispute not, but believe, as Abraham, who

considered not his own body now dead, when he was about a hundred years old, nor yet the deadness of Sarah's womb; he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded, that what he had promised, he was also able to perform. And so, "against hope, believed in hope." (Rom. iv. 18—21.) So look thou not on the dead bones, and dust, and difficulties, but at the promise. (Isa. xxvi. 20, 21.) Martha knew her brother should rise again at the resurrection: but if Christ say, he shall rise before, it must be believed. Come, then, fellow-Christians, let us contentedly commit these carcasses to the dust: that prison shall not long contain them. Let us lie down in peace, and take our rest, it will not be an everlasting night, or endless sleep.^a What if we go out of the troubles and stirs of the world, and enter into those chambers of dust, and the doors be shut upon us, and we hide ourselves, as it were, for a little moment, until the indignation be over-past? Yet, behold the Lord cometh out of his place, to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: and then the earth shall disclose us, and the dust shall hide us no more. As sure as we awake in the morning, when we have slept out the night, so sure shall we then awake. And what if, in the meantime, we must be loathsome lumps, cast out of the sight of men, as not fit to be endured among the living:

^a Lactant. l. vii. c. 25. Some lately came near the Jew's belief in this: *Judæi enim dicunt futurum esse ut Israelitæ soli ex morte in vitam revocentur; Christiani vero populi alii omnes non resurgant.*—*Burtonf. Syn. Judaic.* c. l. p. 25. Itaque hi Christianos solos resurrecturos asserunt. But, on the contrary, saith Tertullian: *Cæterum demutationem etiam post resurrectionem consequuturus est inferos jam expertus: Adhinc enim definimus cartem quidem omni modo resurrecturam, atque illam ex demutatione superventura habitum angelicum suscepturam, &c. Vide plura.*—*Tertul. l. de Anima. 42.* Cum enim utriusque proponitur, corpus atque animam occidi in gehennam, distinguitur corpus ab anima; et relinquitur intelligi corpus, id quod in promptu sit; caro scilicet, quæ sicut occidetur in gehennam si non magis à Deo timuerit occidi, ita et vivificabitur in vitam æternam si maluerit ab hominibus potius interfici: proinde si quis occisionem carnis atque animæ in gehennam ad interitum et finem utriusque substantiæ arripit, non ad supplicium (quasi consumendarum non quasi puniendarum) recordetur iguem gehennæ æternum prædicari in pœnam æternam, et inde æternitatem occisionis agnoscat, propterea humanæ ut temporali prætimendam. Tunc et æternas substantias credet, quarum æterna fit occisio in pœnam. Certè cum post resurrectionem, corpus et anima occidi habeant à Deo in gehennam, satis de utroque constabit, et de carnali resurrectione, et de æterna occisione. Absurdissimum alioquin, si idcirco resuscitata caro occidatur in gehennam, uti finiatur: quod et non resuscitata pateretur. In hoc enim reficietur ne sit, cui non esse jam evenit.—*Tertul. lib. de Resur. Carnis, c. 35. p. (mihi) 410.* Acts xvi. 25—27; 2 Cor. v. 1—4.

what, if our carcasses become as vile as those of the beasts that perish : what, if our bones be dug up, and scattered about the pit brink, and worms consume our flesh. Yet we know that our Redeemer liveth, and shall stand at last on earth, and we shall see him with these eyes. And withal it is but this flesh that suffers all this ; and what is this comely piece of flesh, which thou art loath should come to so base a state ? Is it not a hundred years since it was either nothing, or an invisible something. And is it not most of it for the present, if not an appearing nothing, seeming something to an imperfect sense ; yet, at best, a condensation of invisibles, which, that they may become sensible, are become more gross, and so more vile. Where is all that fair mass of flesh and blood which thou hadst, before sickness consumed thee ? annihilated, it is not ; only resolved into its principles ; show it me if thou canst. Into how small a handful of dust or ashes will that whole mass, if buried or burnt, return : and into how much smaller can a chemist reduce that little, and leave all the rest invisible. What, if God prick the bladder, and let out the wind that puffs thee up to such a substance, and resolve thee into thy principles ? Doth not the seed thou sowest die before it spring ; and what cause have we to be tender of this body ; oh, what care, what labour, what grief and sorrow hath it cost us ; how many a weary, painful, tedious hour ! O my soul, grudge not that God should disburden thee of all this : fear not, lest he should free thee from thy fetters : be not so loath that he should break down thy prison, and let thee go : what, though some terrible earthquake go before ; it is but that the foundations of the prison may be shaken, and so the doors fly open ; the terror will be to thy jailor, but to thee deliverance. O, therefore, at what hour of the night soever thy Lord come, let him find thee, though with thy feet in these stocks, yet singing praises to him, and not fearing the time of thy deliverance. If unclothing be the thing thou fearest, why it is that thou mayest have better clothing put on. If to be turned out of doors be the thing thou fearest, why remember, then, when this earthly house of thy tabernacle is dissolved, thou hast “ a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” How willingly do our soldiers burn their huts, when the siege is ended, being glad their work is done, that they may go home and dwell in houses. Lay down, then, cheerfully this bag of loathsome filth, this lump of corruption ; thou shalt undoubtedly receive it again in incorruption.

Lay down freely this terrestrial, this natural body; believe it, thou shalt receive it again a celestial, a spiritual body. And though thou lay it down into the dirt with great dishonour, thou shalt receive it into glory with honour: and though thou art separated from it through weakness, it shall be raised again, and joined to thee in mighty power. When the trumpet of God shall sound the call, "Come away, arise ye dead;" (1 Cor. xv. 42—45;) who shall then stay behind? Who can resist the powerful command of our Lord; when he shall call to the earth and sea, "O earth, give up thy dead! O sea, give up thy dead?" Then shall our Sampson break for us the bonds of death. And as the ungodly shall, like toads from their holes, be drawn forth whether they will or no; so shall the godly, as prisoners of hope, awake out of sleep, and come with joy to meet their Lord. The first that shall be called, are the saints that sleep; and then the saints that are then alive shall be changed. For Paul hath told us, by the word of the Lord, "That they which are alive, and remain till the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then they which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore, O Christians, comfort one another with these words."^b This is one of the Gospel mysteries: "That we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption; and this mortal, immortality. Then is death swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. xv. 51—57.) Triumph now, O Christian, in these promises; thou shalt shortly triumph in their performance. For this is the day that the Lord will make; "we shall be glad and rejoice therein." (Psalm cxviii.) The grave that could not keep our Lord, cannot keep us: he arose for us, and by the same power will cause us to arise. "For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again; even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him." (1 Thess. iv. 14.) Can the

^b 1 Thess. iv. 15—18. That it is the same body that shall rise, and how far changed, see Chr. Beckman, in Exercit. xxiv. p. 475.

head live, and the body and members remain dead? O, write those sweet words upon thy heart, Christian, "Because I live, ye shall live also." (John xiv. 19.) As sure as Christ lives, ye shall live: and as sure as he is risen, we shall rise. Else the dead perish. Else what is our hope; what advantageth all our duty or suffering? Else the sensual epicure were one of the wisest men; and what better are we than our beasts? Surely our knowledge, more than theirs, would but increase our sorrows; and our dominion over them is no great felicity. The servant hath ofttimes a better life than his master, because he hath few of his master's cares. And our dead carcasses are no more comely, nor yield a sweeter savour, than theirs. But we have a sure ground of hope. And besides this life, we have "a life that is hid with Christ in God; and when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory." (Col. iii. 3, 4.) O let not us be as the purblind world, that cannot see afar off; let us never look at the grave, but let us see the resurrection beyond it. Faith is quick-sighted, and can see as far as that is; yea, as far as eternity. Therefore let our hearts be glad, and our glory rejoice, and our flesh also shall rest in hope; for he will not leave us in the grave, nor suffer us still to see corruption. Yea, "Therefore, let us be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as we know our labour is not in vain in the Lord." (1 Cor. xv. 58.)^c

^c 1 Cor. xv. 13, 14, 17 — 19, 30 — 32. Read Athanasius de Incarn. Verbi throughout, who fully proveth that there should have been no resurrection, had not Christ died; and that he died for all, so far as to raise them. It is more large than to be here transcribed; only a touch of it I will give you. And that he might recover man into the excellencies of incorruption, who was turned into corruption; and might recover them from death, by the subjecting of his own body, and by the grace of resurrection he took them from death, even as a brand out of the fire: for when the Word knew that the death of man was no way else to be dissolved, unless he himself did die for all men, and that it was impossible that the Word himself could die, as being the immortal Son of God; he took to himself a body which could die, that the Word, which is over all, being partaker thereof, might become fit to die for all; and that by the inhabiting Word, it might remain incorruptible, and now corruption might be banished from all by the excellent glory of a resurrection. And so offering the body which he had assumed to death, as a sacrifice free from all spot, he expelled death from all, who were shortly to be like him, that is, dead, by the offering of the like. For the Word, being over all, he offering to God the animated temple and instrument of his body, fulfilled that for all which in death was due. And in that commerce, in which he was made like to all, the incorruptible Son of God did meritoriously clothe all men with incorruption.—*Athanas. de Incarn. Verbi.*

God made not death, but Christ overcame it, when sin had introduced it. Death is from ourselves, but life from the Author and Lord of life. The devil had the power of death till he was overcome by death; (Heb. ii. 14, 15;) but he that liveth and was dead, and is alive for evermore, hath now the keys of death and hell. (Rev. i. 18.) That the very damned live, is to be ascribed to him; that they live in misery, is long of themselves. Not that it is more desirable to them to live miserably, as there they must do, than not to live; but as God's glory is his chief, if not only end, in all his works, so was it the Mediator's chief end in the world's reparation. They shall, therefore, live, whether they will or no, for God's glory, though they live not to their own comfort, because they would not.

But whatsoever is the cause of the wicked's resurrection, this sufficeth to the saint's comfort, that resurrection to glory is only the fruit of Christ's death: ^d and this fruit they shall certainly partake of. The promise is sure: "All that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and come forth." (John v. 28.) "And this is the Father's will which hath sent Christ, that of all which he hath given him he should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day;" (John vi. 39;) "and that every one that believeth on the Son may have everlasting life, and he will raise him up at the last day." (Ver. 40.) If the prayers of the prophet could raise the Shunamite's dead child, and if the dead soldier revived at the touch of the prophet's bones, how certainly shall the will of Christ, and the power of his death, raise us. The voice that said to Jairus' daughter, "Arise;" and to Lazarus, "Arise, and come forth," can do the like for us. If his death immediately raised the dead bodies of many saints in Jerusalem; if he gave power to his apostles to raise the dead; then what doubt of our resurrection? And thus, Christian, thou seest that Christ, having sanctified the grave by his burial, and conquered death, and broke the ice for us, a dead body and

^d Fiducia Christianorum, resurrectio mortuorum; illam credentes sumus, hoc credere veritas cogit. Veritatem Deus aperit, sed vulgus irridet, existimans nihil superesse post mortem.—*Tertul. de Resur. Carnis in initio*, p. 406. If you would see more of the resurrection, and its enemies confuted, read Cyprian. 'De Resur.,' Athenag. 'Ser. de. Resur.,' Ambros. 'De fide Resur.,' August. Steuchus Eugubin. 'De Perenni Philosophia,' Joh. Baptista Aurelius 'De Mortuorum Resur.,' Mar. Ficin. 'De Immort. Animæ.,' Petr. Opiner-sensis 'De Resur.' and 'Immortal. Anim.,' Leonh. Lessius l. 'De Provid.' and l. 'De Immort. Animæ,' Caspar Contarenus cont. Pet. Pomponatium., besides every common-place book, and 'Zanch. de Oper. Dei,' p. 3. l. iii. c. 8; Calvin. adv. Libertin. xxii.; and in Psychopannichia, &c.

a grave is not now so horrid a spectacle to a believing eye ;^e but as our Lord was nearest his resurrection and glory when he was in the grave, even so are we : and he that hath promised to make our bed in sickness, will make the dust as a bed of roses. Death shall not dissolve the union betwixt him and us, nor turn away his affections from us ; but in the morning of eternity he will send his angels, yea, come himself, and roll away the stone, and unseal our grave, and reach us his hand, and deliver us alive to our Father. Why, then, doth the approach of death so cast thee down, O my soul ; and why art thou thus disquieted within me ? The grave is not hell : if it were, yet there is thy Lord present ; and thence should his merit and mercy fetch thee out. Thy sickness is not unto death, though I die, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby. Say not, then, he lifted me up to cast me down, and hath raised me high that my fall may be the lower ; but he casts me down that he may lift me up, and layeth me low that I may rise the higher. A hundred experiences have sealed this truth unto thee, that the greatest dejections are intended but for advantages to thy greatest dignity, and the Redeemer's glory.

Sect. III. The third part of this Prologue to the Saint's Rest, is the public and solemn process at their judgment, where they shall first, themselves, be acquitted and justified ; and then, with Christ, judge the world. Public I may well call it, for all the world must there appear : young and old, of all estates and nations, that ever were from the creation to that day, must here come and receive their doom. The judgment shall be set, and the books opened, and the book of life produced ; "and the dead shall be judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works, and whosoever is not found written in the book of life, is cast into the lake of fire." (Rom. ii. 16, and xiv. 10 ; Rev. xx. 12—15.) O, terrible ! O, joyful day ! Terrible to those that have let their lamps go out, and have not watched, but forgot the coming of their Lord : joyful to the saints, whose waiting and hope was to see this day. Then shall the world behold the goodness and severity of the Lord : on them who perish, severity ; but to his chosen, goodness : when every one must give account of his stewardship,

^e Mors et vita duello confluxere mirandò : rex mortuus, regnat vivus. In hoc duello mors et vita in arenam descenderunt : sed tandem vicit vita, et gloriose exiit, de sepulchro, de morte ipsa triumphans. Irredeamus ergo mortem et cum apostolo dicamus, ubi mors victoria tua ?—*Stella in Luc.* xxiv. p. 378. tom. ii. Psal. xlii. ; John xi. 4 ; Psal. cii. 10.

and every talent of time, health, wit, mercies, afflictions, means, warnings, must be reckoned for ; (Matt. xxiv., and xxv. 5—7 ; Rom. i. 22 ;) when the sins of youth, and those which they had forgotten, and their secret sins, shall all be laid open before angels and men ; when they shall see all their friends, wealth, old delights, all their confidence and false hopes of heaven, to forsake them ;^f when they shall see the Lord Jesus Christ, whom they neglected, whose word they disobeyed, whose ministers they abused, whose servants they hated, now sitting to judge them ; when their own consciences shall cry out against them, and call to their remembrance all their misdoings. Remember at such a time, such or such a sin ; at such a time Christ sued hard for thy conversion ; the minister pressed it home to thy heart, thou wast touched to the quick with the word ; thou didst purpose and promise returning, and yet thou cast off all. When a hundred sermons, sabbaths, mercies, shall each step up and say, I am witness against the prisoner ; Lord, I was abused, and I was neglected ; O, which way will the wretched sinner look ! O, who can conceive the terrible thoughts of his heart ! Now the world cannot help him ; his old companions cannot help him ; the saints neither can nor will ; only the Lord Jesus can : but, oh ! there is the soul-killing misery, he will not ; nay, without violating the truth of his word, he cannot ; though otherwise, in regard of his absolute power, he might. The time was, sinner, when Christ would, and you would not ; and now, oh ! fain would you, and he will not. Then he followed thee, in vain, with entreaties ; O, poor sinner, what doest thou ; will thou sell thy soul and Saviour for a lust : look to me, and be saved ; return, why wilt thou die ? But thy ear and heart were shut up against all. Why, now thou shalt cry, Lord, Lord, open to us ; and he shall say, “ Depart, I know you not, ye workers of iniquity.” (Matt. vii. 22, 23.) Now, mercy, mercy, Lord ; O, but it was mercy you so long set light by, and now your day of mercy is over. What then remains, but to cry out to the mountains, Fall upon us ; and the hills, O cover us from the presence of him that sits upon the throne ! But all in vain ; for thou hast the Lord of mountains and hills for thine enemy, whose voice they will obey, and not thine. Sinner, make not light of this ; for, as thou livest, ex-

^f *Quæ tunc erit fidei gloria ? quæ pœna perfidiæ, cum judicii dies venerit. Quæ lætitia credentium ? quæ mœstitia perfidorum ? noluisse istic prius credere et ut credant jam redire non posse ?—Cyp. ad Demetrian, sect. xxi. p. 330.*

cept a thorough change and coming in to Christ prevent it, which God grant, thou shalt shortly, to thy inconceivable horror, see that day. O, wretch, will thy cups then be wine or gall; will they be sweet or bitter; will it comfort thee to think of thy merry days, and how pleasantly thy time slipped away; will it do thee good to think how rich thou wast, and how honourable thou wast; or will it not rather wound thy very soul to remember thy folly, and make thee, with anguish of heart, and rage against thyself, to cry out, O wretch, where was mine understanding! Didst thou make so light of that sin that now makes thee tremble: how couldst thou hear so lightly of the redeeming blood of the Son of God; how couldst thou quench so many motions of his Spirit, and stifle so many quickening thoughts as were cast into thy soul? What took up all that life's time which thou hadst given thee to make sure work against this day; what took up all thy heart, thy love, and delight, which should have been laid out on the Lord Jesus? Hadst thou room in thy heart for the world, thy friend, thy flesh, thy lusts, and none for Christ? O, wretch, whom hadst thou to love, but him; what hadst thou to do, but to seek him, and cleave to him, and enjoy him! Oh! wast thou not told of this dreadful day a thousand times, till the commonness of that doctrine made thee weary; how couldst thou slight such warnings, and rage against the minister, and say he preached damnation: had it not been better to have heard and prevented it, than now to endure it? O, now, for one offer of Christ, for one sermon, for one day of grace more; but too late; alas! too late. Poor, careless sinner, I did not think here to have said so much to thee; for my business is to refresh the saints; but if these lines do fall into thy hands, and thou vouchsafe the reading of them, I here charge thee, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, and his kingdom; (2 Tim. iv. 1;) that thou make haste and get alone, and set thyself sadly to ponder on these things: ask thy heart,^s Is this true, or is it not; is there such a day, and must I see it? O, what do I then; why trifle I; is it not time, full time, that I had made sure of Christ and comfort long ago; should I sit still another day, who have lost so many; had I not rather be found

^s Nec ignoro plerosque conscientia meritorum nihil se esse post mortem magis optare quam credere. malunt enim extinguī penitus, quam ad supplicia reparari. Quorum error augetur in seculo et libertate remissa, et Dei patientia maxima: cujus quanto judicium tardum, tanto magis justum est.—*Minut. Félix. Octav.* p. 396.

one of the holy, faithful, watchful Christians, than a worldling, a good fellow, or a man of honour: why should I not, then, choose it now; will it be best then, and is it not best now? O, think of these things! A few sad hours spent in serious fore-thoughts is a cheap prevention; it is worth this, or it is worth nothing. Friend, I profess to thee, from the word of the Lord, that of all thy sweet sins, there will then be nothing left, but the sting in thy conscience, which will never out through all eternity; except the blood of Christ, believed in, and valued above all the world, do now, in this day of grace, get it out. Thy sin is like a beautiful harlot: while she is young and fresh, she hath many followers; but when old and withered, every one would shut their hands of her: she is only their shame; none would know her. So will it be with thee: now thou wilt venture on it, whatever it cost thee; but then, when men's rebellious ways are charged on their souls to death,^h O that thou couldst rid thy hands of it; O that thou couldst say, Lord, it was not I. Then, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, naked, imprisoned: how fain would they put it off. Then sin will be sin indeed, and grace will be grace indeed; then, say the foolish virgins, Give us of your oil, for our lamps are out. O, for some of your faith and holiness, which we were wont to mock at; but what is the answer, "Go buy for yourselves; we have little enough; would we had rather much more." Then they will be glad of any thing like grace; and if they can but produce any external familiarity with Christ, or common gifts, how glad are they! Lord, we have eat and drunk in thy presence, prophesied in thy name, cast out devils, done many wonderful works; we have been baptised, heard sermons, professed Christianity: but, alas! this will not serve the turn. He will profess to them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye workers of iniquity. O, dead-hearted sinner, is all this nothing to thee! As sure as Christ is true, this is true; take it in his own words: "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and

^h Hear a heathen: "Sic certe vivendum est, tanquam in conspectu vivamus. Sic cogitandum tanquam aliquis in pectus intimum inspicere possit, et potest. Quid enim prodest ab homine aliquid esse secretum? Nihil Deo clausum interest animis nostris, et cogitationibus mediis intervenit.—*Senec. Epist. ad Luc.* 83. p. 711. tom. ii. Which words Zuinglius repeating, calls him "virum sanctissimum."—Tom. oper. ii. p. 118. *Declar. de Pec. Orig.*

he shall set the sheep on the right hand, and the goats on the left." (Matt. xxv. 31.) And so on, as you may read in the text.

But why tremblest thou, O humble, gracious soul? Cannot the enemies and slighers of Christ be foretold their doom, but thou must quake: do I make sad the soul that God would not have sad? (Ezek. xiii. 22.) Doth not thy Lord know his own sheep, "who have heard his voice, and followed him?" (John x. 27.) He that would not lose the family of one Noah in a common deluge, when him only he had found faithful in all the earth; (Gen. vii. 1—3, and xix. 22;) he that would not overlook one Lot in Sodom; nay, that could do nothing till he went forth: will he forget thee at that day? "Thy Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust to the day of judgment to be punished;" (2 Pet. ii. 9;) he knoweth how to make the same day the greatest for terror to his foes, and yet the greatest for joy to his people. He ever intended it for the great distinguishing and separating day; wherein both love and fury should be manifested to the highest. (Matt. xiii.) O, then, "Let the heavens rejoice, the sea, the earth, the floods, the hills; for the Lord cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity." (Psal. xcvi. 11—13.) But, especially, "Let Sion hear, and be glad, and her children rejoice;" (Psal. xcviii. 7—9;) for, "when God ariseth to judgment, it is to save the meek of the earth." (Psal. xcvi. 8.) They have judged and condemned themselves many a day in heart-breaking confessions, and therefore shall not be judged to condemnation by the Lord; "for there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (1 Cor. xi. 31.) And, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" (Rom. viii. 1, 33.) Shall the law? Why, "Whatsoever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law; but we are not under the law, but under grace: for the law of the Spirit of life, which is in Christ Jesus, hath made us free from the law of sin and death." (Rom. iii. 19, v. 1, vi. 14, and viii. 2.) Or shall conscience? Why, we were, long ago, "justified by faith, and so have peace with God, and have our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience; and the Spirit bearing witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God." (Heb. x. 22.) "It is God that justifieth; who shall condemn?" (Rom. viii. 16.) If our Judge condemn us not, who shall? He that said to the adulterous woman, "Hath no man condemned thee?"

neither do I condemn thee ;" (John viii. 11 ;) He will say to us, more faithfully than Peter to him, "Though all men deny thee, or condemn thee, I will not." (Mark xiv. 31.) "Thou hast confessed me before men, and I will confess thee before my Father, and the angels of heaven." (Matt. x. 32.) He, whose first coming was not "to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved ;" (John iii. 17 ;) I am sure, intends not his second coming to condemn his people, but that they, through him, might be saved. He hath given us eternal life in charter and title already, yea, and partly in possession ; and will he after that condemn us ? When he gave us the knowledge of his Father and himself, he gave us eternal life ; and he hath verily told us, "that he that heareth his word, and believeth on him that sent him, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death to life." (John v. 24, and xvii. 8.) Indeed, if our Judge were our enemy, as he is to the world, then we might well fear. If the devil were our judge, or the ungodly were our judge, then we should be condemned as hypocrites, as heretics, as schismatics, as proud, or covetous, or what not ? But our Judge is Christ, who died ; yea, rather, who is risen again, and maketh request for us : for, "all power is given him in heaven and in earth, and all things delivered into his hands ; and the Father hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man." ⁱ For, though God judge the world, yet the Father, immediately, without his Vicegerent, Christ, judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son, that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. Oh what inexpressible joy may this afford to a believer, that our dear Lord, who loveth our souls, and whom our souls love, shall be our Judge ! Will a man fear to be judged by his dearest friend, by a brother, by a father, or a wife by her own husband ? Christian, did he come down, and suffer, and weep, and bleed, and die for thee, and will he now condemn thee ; was he judged, and condemned, and executed in thy stead, and now will he condemn thee himself ; did he make a bath of his blood for thy sins, and a garment of his own righteousness for thy nakedness, and will he now open them to thy shame ; is he the

ⁱ Rom. viii. 34, 35 ; Matt. xxviii. 18 ; John xiii. 3 ; John ix. 22, 23, 27. That Christ's judging power according to his human nature, is not the principal, primitive, supreme ; but only the supreme delegate derived power, is certain ; *sicut Scotus*, in l. iv. Sent. Dist. 48. qu. i. p. 256. (mihi.)

undertaker for thy salvation, and will he be against thee ; hath it cost him so dear to save thee, and will he now himself destroy thee ; hath he done the most of the work already, in redeeming, regenerating, and sanctifying, justifying, preserving, and perfecting thee, and will he now undo all again : nay, hath he begun, and will he not finish ; hath he interceded so long for thee to the Father, and will he cast thee away himself ? If all these be likely, then fear, and then rejoice not. Oh what an unreasonable sin is unbelief, that will charge our Lord with such unmercifulness and absurdities ! Well, then, fellow-Christians, let the terror of that day be ever so great, surely our Lord can mean no ill to us in all : let it make the devils tremble, and the wicked tremble ; but it shall make us to leap for joy : let Satan accuse us, we have our answer at hand ; our surety hath discharged the debt. If he have not fulfilled the law, then let us be charged as breakers of it : if he have not suffered, then let us suffer ; but if he have, we are free : nay, our Lord will make answer for us himself. “ These are mine, and shall be made up with my jewels : for their transgressions was I stricken, and cut off from the earth ; for them was I bruised and put to grief : my soul was made an offering for their sin, and I bore their transgressions. They are my seed, and the travail of my soul : I have healed them by my stripes ; I have justified them by my knowledge.” (Isa. liii. 5, 8, 10, 11.) “ They are my sheep : who shall take them out of my hands ? ” (John x. 28.) Yea, though the humble soul be ready to speak against itself, “ Lord, when did we see thee hungry, and fed thee,” &c., yet will not Christ do so. This is the day of the believer’s full justification. They were, before, made just, and esteemed just, and by faith justified in law ; and this, to some, evidenced to their consciences. But now they shall both, by apology, be maintained just ; and, by sentence, pronounced just actually, by the lively voice of the Judge himself ; ^k which is the most perfect justification. Their justification by faith, is a giving them title in law, to that apology and absolving sentence which at that day they shall actually receive from the mouth of Christ ; by which sentence, their

^k Observ. That a complete and full absolution from all sin, is not enjoyed till the day of judgment. Mr. A. Burgess, of ‘ Justification,’ lect. xxix. p. 258. The Scripture, not only in this privilege of remission of sin, but in others also, makes the complement and fulness of them to be at the day of judgment : Eph. i. 7, and iv. 30 ; Rom. viii. 23 ; 1 John iii. 2 ; Matt. xix. 23. Mr. A. Burgess *ubi supr.*

sin, which before was pardoned in the sense of the law, is now perfectly pardoned, or blotted out by this ultimate judgment. (Acts iii. 19.) Therefore, well may it be called the time of refreshing, as being to the saints, the perfecting of all their former refreshments. He who was vexed with a quarrelling conscience, an accusing world, a cursing law, is solemnly pronounced righteous by the Lord, the Judge.¹ Though he cannot plead Not guilty, in regard of fact, yet, being pardoned, he shall be acquitted by the proclamation of Christ: and that is not all; but he that was accused as deserving hell, is pronounced a member of Christ, a son of God, and so adjudged to eternal glory. The sentence of pardon, passed by the Spirit and conscience within us, was wont to be exceeding sweet; but this will fully and finally resolve the question, and leave no room for doubting again for ever. We shall more rejoice that our names are found written in the book of life, than if men or devils were subjected to us; and it must needs affect us deeply with the sense of our mercy and happiness, to behold the contrary condition of others; to see most of the world tremble with terror, while we triumph with joy; to hear them doomed to everlasting flames, and see them thrust into hell, when we are proclaimed heirs of the kingdom; to see our neighbours, that lived in the same towns, came to the same congregations, sat in the same seats, dwelt in the same houses, and were esteemed more honourable in the world than ourselves; to see them now so differenced from us, and by the Searcher of hearts, eternally separated. Thus, with the great magnificence and dreadfulness of the day, doth the apostle pathetically express: "It is righteous with God, to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled, rest with us; when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power," &c. (2 Thess. 1, 6—10.) And, now, is not here enough to make that day a welcome day, and the thoughts of it delightful to us? but yet there is more. We shall be so far from the dread of that judgment, that ourselves shall become the judges. Christ will take his people, as it were, into commission

¹ The sins before faith are forgiven; not so as that they are not committed, but so as if they had not been committed.—*Clem. Alexand. Stromat.* l. iv.

with him; and they shall sit and approve his righteous judgment. Oh fear not now the reproaches, scorns, and censures, of those that must then be judged by us: did you think, O wretched worldlings, that those poor, despised men, whom you made your daily derision, should be your judges; did you believe this, when you made them stand as offenders before the bar of your judgment? No more than Pilate, when he was judging Christ, did believe that he was condemning his Judge; or the Jews, when they were whipping, imprisoning, killing the apostles, did think to see them sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. "Do you not know," saith Paul, "that the saints shall judge the world: nay, know you not that we shall judge angels?" (1 Cor. vi. 2, 3.) Surely, were it not the word of Christ that speaks it, this advancement would seem incredible, and the language arrogant; yet even Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of this, saying, "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed; and of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." (Jude 14.) Thus shall the saints be honoured, and the "righteous have dominion in the morning." (Psal. ix. 14.) O, that the careless world were "but wise to consider this, and that they would remember their latter end!" (Deut. xxxii. 29.) That they would be now of the same mind as they will be when they shall see the "heavens pass away with a noise, and the elements melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, to be burnt up." (2 Pet. iii. 10.) When all shall be on fire about their ears, and all earthly glory consumed; "for the heavens, and the earth, which are now, are reserved unto fire against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men." (2 Pet. iii. 7.) But, alas! when all is said, "the wicked will do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." (Dan. xii. 10.) Rejoice, therefore, O ye saints, yet watch; and what you have, hold fast till your Lord come; (Rev. ii. 25;) and study that use of this doctrine which the apostle propounds. "Seeing, then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be, in all holy conversation and godliness: looking for and hasting to the coming of the day of God; wherein the heavens being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements melt with fervent heat." (2 Pet. iii. 11, 12.) But go your way, keep close with God,

and wait till your change come, and till this end be ; “ for you shall rest, and stand in the lot at the end of the days.” (Dan. xii. 13.)

The fourth antecedent, and highest step to the saints' advancement, is their solemn coronation, enthronizing, and receiving into the kingdom. For, as Christ, their Head, is anointed both King and Priest, so under him are his people made unto God both kings and priests ; (Rev. i. 5 ;) (for prophecy, that ceaseth) “ to reign and to offer praises for ever.” (Rev. v. 10.) “ The crown of righteousness, which was laid up for them, shall by the Lord the righteous Judge be given them at that day.” (2 Tim. iv. 8.) “ They have been faithful to the death, and therefore shall receive the crown of life.” (Rev. ii. 10.) And according to the improvement of their talents here, so shall their rule and dignity be enlarged, (Matt. xxv. 21, 23,) so that they are not dignified with empty titles, but real dominions : for Christ “ will take them and set them down with himself on his own throne ; (Rev. iii. 21 ;) and will give them power over the nations, even as he received of his Father ; (Rev. ii. 26—28 ;) and will give them the morning star. The Lord himself will give them possession with these applauding expressions : “ Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things : enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.” (Matt. xxv. 21, 23.) And with this solemn and blessed proclamation shall he enthrone them : “ Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” Every word full of life and joy. “ Come ;” this is the holding forth of the golden sceptre, to warrant our approach unto this glory. Come now as near as you will : fear not the Bethshemite's judgment, for the enmity is utterly taken away. This is not such a “ come” as we were wont to hear. “ Come, take up your cross and follow me :” though that was sweet, yet this much more. “ Ye blessed ;” blessed indeed, when that mouth shall so pronounce us. For though the world hath accounted us accursed, and we have been ready to account ourselves so, yet certainly, those that he blesseth are blessed, and those whom he curseth, only are cursed ; and his blessing shall not be revoked : but he hath blessed us, and we shall be blessed. “ Of my Father ;” blessed in the Father's love as well as the Son's, for they are one. The Father hath testified his love in their election, donation to Christ, sending of Christ, accepting his ransom, &c., as

the Son hath also testified his. "Inherit;" no longer bondmen, nor servants only, nor children under age, who differ not in possession, but only in title from servants; (Gal. iv. 1, 5—7;) but now we are heirs of the kingdom, (Jam. ii. 5,) coheirs with Christ. "The kingdom;" no less than the kingdom. Indeed, to be a King of kings, and Lord of lords, is our Lord's own proper title; but to be kings and reign with him, is ours. The fruition of this kingdom, is as the fruition of the light of the sun, each have the whole, and the rest nevertheless. "Prepared for you;" God is the *alpha* as well as the *omega* of our blessedness. Eternal love hath laid the foundation. He prepared the kingdom for us, and then prepared us for the kingdom. This is the preparation of his counsel and decree, for the execution whereof Christ was yet to make a further preparation. "For you;" not for believers only in general, who without individual persons are nobody; nor only for you, upon condition of your believing, but for you personally and determinately, for all the conditions were also prepared for you. "From the foundation of the world;" not only from the promise after Adam's fall, as some, but, as the phrase usually signifieth though not always, from eternity. These were the eternal thoughts of God's love towards us, and this is it he purposed for us. (Matt. xxv. 20, 21, 34, 35; Rev. ii. and iii.)

But a greater difficulty ariseth in our way.^m In what sense is our improvement of our talent, our well-doing, our overcoming, our harbouring, visiting, feeding, &c., Christ, in his little ones, alleged as a reason of our coronation and glory? Is not it the purchased possession and mere fruit of Christ's blood? If every man must be judged according to his works, and receive according to what they have done in the flesh, whether good or evil; and God "will render to every man according to his deeds;" (Rom. ii. 6, 7;) and give eternal life to all men, if they patiently continue in well-doing, and give right to the tree of life, (Rev. xxii. 14,) and entrance into the city, to the doers of his commandments: and if the last absolving sentence be the

^m See what is after cited in cap. vii. sect. 2. In die judicii quoniam *scdus gratiæ vim legis seu juris obtinet* (promulgatum est enim in toto orbe terrarum per præcones idoneos) id unum probandum erit: nimirum, nos habuisse conditionem *scderis gratiæ*, scilicet fidem. Itaque proferenda erunt in medio opera; presertim charitatis tanquam illius conditionis, hoc est, fidei, effecta atque argumenta demonstrativa, ut vulgo loquuntur à posteriori.—*D. Jo. Placeus, in Thes. Salmur.* vol. 1, p. 34; *Lege et Thesin*, 43—45. of that most solid dispute of Justification.

completing of our justification, and so "the doers of the law be justified;" (Rom. ii. 13;) why, then, what is become of free grace; or justification by faith only; of the sole righteousness of Christ to make us accepted? Then, the papists say rightly, That we are righteous by our personal righteousness; and good works concur to justification.

Answ. I did not think to have said so much upon controversy; but because the difficulty is very great, and the matter very weighty, as being near the foundation, I have in another book added to what I said before, certain brief positions, containing my thoughts on this subject; which may tend to the clearing of these and many other difficulties hereabouts, to which I refer you.

But that the plain, constant language of Scripture may not be perverted or disregarded, I only premise these advertisements by way of caution, till thou come to read the fuller answer.

1. Let not the names of men draw thee one way or other, nor make thee partial in searching for truth; dislike the men for their unsound doctrine; but call not doctrine unsound, because it is theirs; nor sound, because of the repute of the writer.

2. Know this, that as an unhumbléd soul is far apter to give too much to duty and personal righteousness, than to Christ; so an humble, self-denying Christian is as likely to err on the other hand, in giving less to duty than Christ hath given, and laying all the work from himself on Christ, for fear of robbing Christ of the honour; and so much to look at Christ without him, and think he should look at nothing in himself: that he forgets Christ within him. As Luther said of Melancthon's self-denying humility, "*Soli Deo omnia deberi tam obstinate asserit, ut mihi plane videatur saltem in hoc errare, quod Christum ipse fingat longius abesse cordi suo quam sit revera—Certe nimis nullus in hoc est Philippus.*" He so constantly ascribes all to God, that to me he seems directly to err, at least in this, that he feigneth or imagineth Christ to be further off from his own heart than indeed he is. Certainly he is too much nothing in this.ⁿ

ⁿ Read Mr. Rich. Hooker's 'Discourse of Justification,' how far works concur: and Mr. Mede's Sermon on Luke ii. 13, 14; and on Matt. vii. 21; and on Acts x. 4; and on Nehem. xiii. 14, 22; and Matt. x. 41. And, *Dave-nant de Justitia Habituali et Actuali*, most fully and solidly. *Agnitionem accepit homo boni et mali; bonum est autem obedire Deo et credere ei, et custodire ejus præceptum, et hoc est vita hominis. Quemadmodum non obedire Deo malum, et hoc est mors ejus.*—*Iraeneus adv. Hæreses*, l. iv. c. 76.

3. Our giving to Christ more of the work than Scripture doth, or rather our ascribing it to him out of the Scripture way and sense, doth but dishonour, and not honour him ;^o and depress, but not exalt his free grace ; while we deny the inward, sanctifying work of his Spirit, and extol his free justification, which are equal fruits of his merit, we make him an imperfect Saviour.

4. But to arrogate to ourselves any part of Christ's prerogative, is most desperate of all, and no doctrine more directly overthrows the Gospel, almost, than that of justification by the merits of our own, or by works of the law.

And thus we have, by the line and plummet of Scripture, fathomed this fourfold stream, and seen the Christian safely landed in paradise ; and, in this four-wheeled fiery chariot, conveyed honourably to his rest. Now, let us a little further view those mansions, consider his privileges, and see whether there be any glory like unto this glory ; read and judge, but not by outward appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

CHAP. VI.

This Rest most excellent, discovered by Reason.

THE next thing to be handled is, the excellent properties of this rest, and admirable attributes, which, as so many jewels, shall adorn the crown of the saints. And first, before we speak of them particularly, let us try this happiness by the rules of the philosophers, and see whether they will not approve it the most transcendently good : not as if they were a sufficient touchstone, but that both the worldling and the saint may see, when any thing stands up in competition with this glory for the pre-eminence, reason itself will conclude against it. Now, in order of good, the philosopher will tell you, that by these rules you may know which is best.

Sect. I. 1. That which is desired and sought for itself, is better

^o Take heed lest thou love the Gospel, because it hath always glad tidings, and thou canst not abide the precepts or threatenings, because they speak hard things to thee. There may be a carnal gospeller, as well as a popish legalist.—*Mr. Burgess, of Justification, lect. xxviii. p. 256.* Dicimus Deum judicare secundum opera, quia prout illa fuerint vel bona vel mala, aut æternam vitam consequemur, aut æternam damnationem. Sed non inde sequitur, opera causas esse nostræ salutis.—*Pet. Mart. in Rom. ii. p. (mihi) 88.*

than that which is desired for something else: or the end, as such, is better than all the means. This concludeth for heaven's pre-eminence. All things are but means to that end. If any thing here be excellent, it is because it is a step to that; and the more conducive thereto, the more excellent. The salvation of our souls is the end of our faith, our hope, our diligence, of all mercies, of all ordinances, as before is proved. It is not for themselves, but for this rest, that all these are desired and used. (1 Pet. v. 9; 1 Thess. v. 8; 2 Tim. ii. 10.) Praying is not the end of praying, nor preaching the end of preaching, nor believing the end of believing. These are but the way to him, who is the way to this rest. Indeed, Christ himself is both the way and the rest, the means and the end, singularly desirable as the way, but yet more as the end. (John xiv. 6.) If any thing that ever you saw or enjoyed, appear lovely and desirable, then must its end be so much more.

Sect. II. 2. In order of good, the last is still the best; for all good tends to perfection. The end is still the last enjoyed, though first intended. Now, this rest is the saints' last estate. Their beginning was as a grain of mustard-seed, but their perfection will be an estate high and flourishing. They were taken with David from the sheep-fold, to reign as kings for ever. Their first day was a day of small things, but their last will be an everlasting perfection. They sowed in tears, but they reap in joy. If their prosperity here, their *res secundæ*, were desirable, much more their *res ultimæ*, their final blessedness. (Psal. cxxvi. 5.) Rondeletius saw a priest at Rome, who would fall down in an ecstasy whenever he heard those words of Christ, *Consummatum est*, "It is finished;" but observing him careful in his fall ever to lay his head in a soft place, he, suspecting the dissimulation, by the threats of a cudgel quickly recovered him.^p But, methinks, the forethought of that consummation and last estate we spake of, should bring a considering Christian into such an unfeigned ecstasy, that he should even forget the things of the flesh, and no care or fear should raise him out of it. Surely, that is well which ends well, and that is good which is good at last; and, therefore, heaven must needs be good.

Sect. III. 3. Another rule is this: That whose absence or loss is the worst or the greatest evil, must needs itself be best, or the greatest good: and is there a greater loss than to lose this rest? If you could ask the restless souls that are shut out of it, they

^p Rondeletius, in Method. Curan. c. de Catalep. p. 98.

would tell you more sensibly than I can ; for as none know the sweetness like those who enjoy it, so none know the loss like those who are deprived of it. Wicked men are here senseless of the loss, because they know not what they lose, and have the delights of flesh and sense to make them up, and make them forget it : but when they shall know it to their torment, as the saints do to their joy, and when they shall see men, from the east and west, sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God, and themselves shut out ; (Luke xiii. 29 ;) when they shall know both what they have lost, and for what, and why they lost it, surely there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. He that loses riches may have more, and he that loseth honour may repair it ; or if not, yet he is not undone. He that loseth life may save it ; but what becomes of him that loseth God ; and who, or what, shall repair his loss ? (Mark viii. 35.) We can bear the loss of any thing below : if we have it not, we can either live without it, or die, and live eternally without it : but can we do so without God in Christ ? (Matt. vi. 33.) As God gives us outward things as auctaries, as overplus, or above measure, into our bargain, so when he takes them from us he takes away our superfluities, rather than our necessities, and pareth but our nails, and toucheth not the quick. But can we so spare our part in glory ? You know whose question it is, “ What shall it profit a man to win all the world, and lose his own soul ? ” Will it prove a saving match ? Or, “ What shall a man give for the ransom of his soul ? ” (Matt. xvi. 26.) Christians, compare but all your losses with that loss, and all your sufferings with that suffering ; and I hope you will lay your hand upon your mouth, and cease your repining thoughts for ever.

Sect. IV. 4. Another rule is this : That which cannot be given by man, or taken away by man, is ever better than that which can ; and then I hope heaven will carry it ; for, who hath the key of the everlasting treasures, and who is the disposer of the dignities of the saints ? Who saith, “ Come ye blessed, and go ye cursed ? ” Is it the voice of God, or of mere man ? If “ every good and perfect gift cometh from above, from the Father of lights,” (James i. 17,) whence, then, cometh the gift of eternal light with the Father ? Whose privilege soever it is to be key-keepers of the visible churches here below ; surely no mere man, but the man of sin, will challenge the keys of that kingdom, and undertake to shut out, or take in, or to dispose

of that treasure of the church. We may be beholden to men, as God's instruments, for our faith, but no further; for "who is Paul, or who is Apollos, but ministers by whom we believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?" (1 Cor. iii. 4.) Surely, every step to that glory, every gracious gift and act, every deliverance and mercy to the church, shall be so clearly from God, that his very name shall be written in the forehead of it, and his excellent attributes stamped upon it, that he who runs may read it was the work of God; and the question may easily be answered, whether it be from heaven, or of men; much more evidently that glory is the gift of the God of glory. What, can man give God, or earth and dust give heaven! Surely, no: and as much is it beyond them to deprive us of it. Tyrants and persecutors may take away our goods, but not our chief good; our liberties here, but not that state of freedom; our heads, but not our crown.⁴ You can shut us up in prisons, and shut us out of your church and kingdom, but shut us out of heaven if you can. Try in lower attempts. Can you deny us the light of the sun, and cause it to forbear its shining? Can you stop the influences of the planets, or deny us the dew of heaven, or command the clouds to shut up their womb, or stay the course of the flowing streams, or seal up the passages of the deep? How much less can you deprive us of our God, or deny us the light of his countenance, or stop the influences of his Spirit, or forbid the dew of his grace to fall, or stay the streams of his love, and shut up his overflowing, everflowing springs, or seal up the bottomless depth of his bounty? You can kill our bodies, if he permit you; but try whether you can reach our souls. Nay, it is not in the saints' own power to give to, or take away from themselves this glory: so that, according to this rule, there is no state like the saints' rest; for no man can give this rest to us, and none can take our joy from us. (John xvi. 22.)

Sect. V. 5. Another rule is this: That is ever better or best which ever maketh the owner or possessor himself better or best: and surely, according to this rule, there is no state like heaven. Riches, honour, and pleasure, make a man neither better nor best: grace here makes us better, but not best; that is reserved as the prerogative of glory.⁵ That is our good which

⁴ Decrescere summum bonum non potest.—*Senec. Epist.* lxvi. p. 644. Mortalia eminent, cadunt; deterantur, crescunt; exhauriuntur, implentur: divinatorum una natura est.—*Ibid.* p. 645.

⁵ Ut Seneca de vita beata abunde contra Epicureos probavit.

doth us good, and that doth us good which makes us good; else it may be good in itself, but not good to us. External good is at too great a distance to be our happiness. It is not bread on our tables, but in our stomachs, that must nourish; nor blood on our clothes or skin, but in the liver, heart, and veins, which is our life.^s Nay, the things of the world are so far from making the owners good, that they prove not the least impediments thereto, and snares to the best of men. Riches and honour do seldom help to humility; but of pride they occasionally become most frequent fomenters. The difficulty is so great of conjoining graciousness with greatness, that it is next to an impossibility: and their conditions so rare, that they are next to inconsistent. To have a heart taken up with Christ and heaven, when we have health and abundance in the world, is neither easy nor ordinary. Though soul and body compose but one man, yet they seldom prosper both together. Therefore, that is our chief good which will do us good at the heart; and that is our true glory which makes us all glorious within; and that the blessed day which will make us holy and blessed men; which will not only beautify our house, but cleanse our hearts; not only give us new habitations, and new relations, but also new souls and new bodies. The true knowing, living Christian complains more frequently and more bitterly of the wants and woes within him, than without him. If you overhear his prayers, or see him in his tears, and ask him what aileth him, he will cry out more, 'Oh! my dark understanding! oh! my hard, my unbelieving heart!' rather than, 'Oh! my dishonour!' or 'Oh! my poverty!' Therefore, it is his desired place and state, which affords a relief suitable to his necessities and complaints. And surely that is only this rest.

Sect. VI. 6. Another rule is, that the difficulty of obtaining shows the excellency: and, surely, if you consider but what it cost Christ to purchase it; what it costs the Spirit to bring men's hearts to it; what it costs ministers to persuade to it; what it costs Christians, after all this, to obtain it; and what it costs many a half-Christian that, after all, goes without it: you will say, that here is difficulty, and therefore excellency. Trifles may be had at a trivial rate, and men may have damnation far

^s Quomodo non summa fœlicitate et vera tranquillitate fruerentur, quibus nihil est quod divinæ voluntati reluctetur, nihil quod turbet et à mente Dei alienet, nihil quod desideretur extra voluntatem Dei?—*Muscul. in Matt. vi. 30m. i. p. 127.*

more easily. It is but to lie still, and sleep out our days in careless laziness.^t It is but to take our pleasure, and mind the world, and cast away the thoughts of sin, and grace, and Christ, and heaven, and hell, out of our minds; and do as the most do, and never trouble ourselves about these high things, but venture our souls upon our presumptuous conceits and hopes, and let the vessel swim which way it will; and then stream, and wind, and tide, will all help us apace to the gulf of perdition. You may burn a hundred houses easier than build one; and kill a thousand men, than make one alive. The descent is easy, the ascent not so. To bring diseases is but to cherish sloth, please the appetite, and take what most delights us; but to cure them, will cost bitter pills, loathsome potions, tedious gripings, absteinious, accurate living; and perhaps all fall short too. He that made the way, and knows the way better than we, hath told us "it is narrow and strait," and requires striving; and they that have placed it more truly and observantly than we, do tell us it lies through many tribulations, and is with much ado passed through. Conclude, then it is surely somewhat worth that must cost all this.

Sect. VII. 7. Another rule is this: That is best, which not only supplieth necessity, but affordeth abundance.^u By necessity is meant here, that which we cannot live without; and, by abundance, is meant a more perfect supply, a comfortable, not a useless abundance. Indeed, it is suitable to a christian state and use, to be scanted here, and to have only from hand to mouth; and that, not only in his corporeal, but in his spiritual comforts. Here we must not be filled full, that so our emptiness may cause hungering, and our hungering cause seeking and craving, and our craving testify our dependance, and occasion receiving, and our receiving occasion thanks returning, and all advance the glory of the Giver. But when we shall be brought to the well-head, and united close to the overflowing fountain, we shall then thirst no more, because we shall be empty no

^t Bion dicere solebat, facilem esse ad inferos viam, nam illic homines adire clausis oculis.—*Laert.* l. iv. c. 7: Quod ille dixit quia morientibus clauduntur oculi; nos dicere possumus de mentis cæcitate et socordia. Facilis descensus Averni, &c.

^u Quicquid præter te est, non reficit, non sufficit; si ad tempus sufficit, non tamen perpetuo satiat quin adhuc amplius quærat; qui autem te habet, satiatus est; finem suum habet; non habet ultra quod quærat; quia tu es super omne visibile, audibile, odorabile, gustabile, tangibile, sensibile.—*Gers. par.* 3. *Alphabet. Divini Amoris*, cap. xiv.

more. Surely, if those blessed souls did not abound in their blessedness, they would never so abound in praises. Such blessing, and honour, and glory, and praise to God, would never accompany common mercies. All those Allelujahs are not, surely, the language of needy men. Now, we are poor, we speak supplications, and our beggar's tone discovers our low condition; almost all our language is complaining and craving, our breath sighing, and our life a labouring. (Prov. xviii. 23.) But, surely, where all this is turned into eternal praising and rejoicing, the case must needs be altered, and all wants supplied and forgotten. I think their hearts full of joy, and their mouths full of thanks, proves their state abounding full of blessedness.

Sect. VIII. S. Reason concludes that for the best, which is so in the judgment of the best and wisest men. Though it is true the judgment of imperfect man can be no perfect rule of truth or goodness; yet God revealeth this good to all on whom he will bestow it, and hides not from his people the end they should aim at and attain. If the holiest men are the best and wisest, then their lives tell you their judgments; and their unwearied labour and sufferings for this rest, show you they take it for the perfection of their happiness. If men of the greatest experience be the wisest men, and they that have tried both estates, then, surely it is vanity and vexation that is found below, and solid happiness and rest above. If dying men are wiser than others, who, by the world's forsaking them, and by the approach of eternity, begin to be undeceived; then, surely, happiness is hereafter, and not here: for though the deluded world, in their flourishing prosperity, can bless themselves in their fool's paradise, and merrily jest at the simplicity of the saints, yet scarce one of many, even of the worst of them, but are ready at last to cry out with Balaam, "O, that I might die the death of the righteous, and my last end might be like his!" Never take heed, therefore, what they think or say now; for as sure as they shall die, they will one of these days think and say clean contrary. As we regard not what a drunken man says, because it is not he, but the drink; and when he hath slept he will awake in another mind; so why should we regard what wicked men say now, who are drunk with security and fleshly delights, when we know beforehand, for certain, that when they have slept the sleep of death, at the furthest, they will awake in another mind. Only pity the perverted un-

derstandings of these poor men, who are beside themselves; knowing that one of these days, when, too late experience brings them to their right minds, they will be of a far different judgment. They ask us, 'What are you wiser than your forefathers; than all the town besides; than such and such great men, and learned men?' And do you think, in good sadness, we may not, with better reason, ask you, 'What are you wiser than Enoch, and Noah; than Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Samuel; than David and Solomon; than Moses and the prophets; than Peter, Paul, all the apostles, and all the sons of God, in all ages and nations, that ever went to heaven; yea, than Jesus Christ himself?' Men may be deceived; but we appeal to the unerring judgment of wisdom itself, even the wise, all-knowing God, whether "a day in his courts be not better than a thousand elsewhere;" and whether "it be not better to be doorkeepers there, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness?" (Psal. lviii. 10.) Nay, whether the very "reproaches of Christ (even the scorns we have from you, for Christ's sake and the Gospel's,) be not greater riches than all the treasures of the world?" (Heb. xi. 25, 26.) If wisdom, then, may pass the sentence, you see which way the cause will go; and "wisdom is justified of her children." (Matt. xi. 19.)

Sect. IX. Lastly: another rule in reason is this: That good which containeth all other good in it, must needs itself be best. And where do you think, in reason, that all the streams of goodness do finally empty themselves? Is it not in God, from whom, by secret springs, they finally proceed? Where, else, do all the lines of goodness centre? Are not all the sparks contained in this fire; and all the drops in this ocean? Surely, the time was when there was nothing besides God, and then all good was only in him.* And even now the creature's essence and existence are secondary, derived, contingent, improper, in comparison of his, "who is, and was, and is to come;" whose

* *Quærendum est (ut summum bonum) quod not fiat indies deterius; cui non possit obstari; quo nil melius possit optari. Quid hoc est? Animus: sed hic rectus, bonus, magnus. Quid aliud voces hunc quam Deum in humano corpore hospitantem? Hic animus tam in equitem Romanum, quam in servum potest cadere. Quid est eques Romanus? aut libertinus? aut servus? Nomina ex ambitione aut ex injuria nata. Subsiliare in cælum ex angulo licet; exsurge modo, et te quoque dignum finge Deo? finges autem non auro, non argento. Non potest ex hac materia imago Deo exprimi similis.—Senec. Epist. xxxi. ad Luc. tom. ii. p. 583. Who would think these were a heathen's words?*

name alone is called, "I am." What do thine eyes see, or thine heart conceive desirable, which is not there to be had? Sin, indeed, there is none; but durst thou call that good? Worldly delights there are none; for they are good but for the present necessity, and please but the brutish senses. Brethren, do you fear losing or parting with any thing you now enjoy? What! Do you fear you shall want when you come to heaven? Shall you want the drops when you have the ocean; or the light of the candle, when you have the sun: or the shallow creature, when you have the perfect Creator? "Cast thy bread upon the waters, and after many days thou shalt find it." (Eccles. xi. 1.) Lay abroad thy tears, thy prayers, pains, boldly, and unweariedly: as God is true, thou dost but set them to usury, and shalt receive a hundredfold. (Matt. xix. 29.) Spare not, man, for state, for honour, for labour. If heaven do not make amends for all, God hath deceived us; which who dare once imagine. Cast away friends, houses, lands, life, if he bid thee: leap into the sea, as Peter, (Matt. viii. 35,) if he command thee: lose thy life, and thou shalt save it everlastingly; when those that saved theirs, shall lose them everlastingly. Venture all, man, upon God's word and promise. There is a day of rest coming which will fully pay for all. All the pence and the farthings thou expendest for him, are contained, with infinite advantage, in the massy gold and jewels of thy crown. When Alexander had given away his treasure, and they asked him where it was, he pointed to the poor, and said, "*In scriniis*," In my chests. And when he went upon a hopeful expedition, he gave away his gold; and when he was asked what he kept for himself, he answers, "*Spem majorum et meliorum*," The hope of greater and better things. How much more boldly may we lay out all, and point to heaven, and say, it is *in scriniis*, in our everlasting treasure; and take that hope of greater and better things, instead of all. Nay, lose thyself for God, and renounce thyself, and thou shalt at that day find thyself again in him. Give him thyself, and he will receive thee upon the same terms as Socrates did his scholar, Æschines; who gave himself to his master, because he had nothing else, "*Accipio, sed ea lege ut te tibi meliorem reddam quam accepi*:" that he may return thee to thyself better than he received thee.^y So, then, this rest is the good

^y Æschines pauper Socratis auditor: nihil, inquit, dignum te inveni quod dare tibi possim: et hoc modo pauperem me esse sentio. Itaque dono tibi, quod unum habeo, meipsum. Hoc munus rogo, qualecunque est, boni consu-

which containeth all other good in it. And thus you see, according to the rules of reason, the transcendent excellency of the saints' glory in the general. We shall next mention the particular excellencies.

CHAP. VII.

The Excellencies of our Rest.

YET let us draw a little nearer, and see more immediately from the pure fountain of the Scriptures, what further excellencies this rest affordeth. And the Lord hide us in the clefts of the rock, and cover us with the hands of indulgent grace, while we approach to take this view. And the Lord grant we may put off from our feet the shoes of irreverence and fleshly conceivings, while we stand upon this holy ground.

Sect. I. And first, it is a most singular honour and ornament, in the style of the saint's rest, to be called the purchased possession; that it is the fruit of the blood of the Son of God; yea, the chief fruit; yea, the end and perfection of all the fruits and efficacy of that blood. Surely, love is the most precious ingredient in the whole composition; and of all the flowers that grew in the garden of love, can there be brought one more sweet and beautiful to the garland, than this blood? Greater love than this there is not; to lay down the life of the lover. And to have this our Redeemer ever before our eyes, and the liveliest sense and freshest remembrance of that dying, bleeding love still upon our souls! O, how will it fill our souls with perpetual ravishments, to think, that in the streams of this blood we have swum through the violence of the world, the snares of Satan, the seducements of flesh, the curse of the law, the wrath of an offended God, the accusations of a guilty conscience, and the vexing doubts and fears of an unbelieving heart, and are passed through all, and are arrived safely at the breast of God! Now we are stupified with vile and senseless hearts, that can hear all the story of this bloody love, and read all the dolours and sufferings of love, and hear all his sad complaints, and all with dulness, and unaffected. He cries to us, "Behold

las cogitesque alios cum multum tibi dederint, plus sibi reliquisse. Cui Socrates; Quid ni tu, inquit, mihi magnum munus dederis, nisi forte parvo te æstimas? Habeo itaque curæ, ut te meliorem tibi reddam quam accepi.—Senec. de Benef. l. 1. c. viii. p. 385.

and see ; is it nothing to you, O, all ye that pass by ? Is there any sorrow like unto my sorrow ?” (Lam. i. 12.) And we will scarce hear or regard the dolorous voice, nor scarce turn aside to view the wounds of him who turned aside, and took us up to heal our wounds at this so dear a rate.^z But, oh ! then our perfected souls will feel as well as hear, and, with feeling apprehensions, flame again in love for love. Now we set his picture, wounded and dying, before our eyes, but can get it no nearer our hearts than if we believed nothing of what we read ; but, then, when the obstructions between the eye and the understanding are taken away, and the passage opened between the head and the heart, surely our eyes will everlastingly affect our heart. And while we view, with one eye, our slain, revived Lord,

^z If Christ came to bear the curse which was against us, how should he be made a curse but by taking that death which the curse lay in ? And if the death of our Lord was the redemption of all men, and by his death the middle wall of partition was broken down, and the gentiles called, how should he invite us to himself if he were not crucified ? for it is only on the cross that men die with their arms stretched out.—*Athanas. lib. de Incarn. Verbi.* Hæc enim cum sit principalis et summa hominis fælicitas secundum animam, non poterat conferri nisi per principale et summum humanæ redemptionis, et pro peccatis nostris satisfactionis principium sacrificium, viz. Messiæ.—*Jos. De Voisin de Lege Divina*, c. 8. p. 97. Lege et eundem Voisin Theolog. Judæor. l. 2. c. 5. pp. 293, 294. Quid mirum si caput pro membris accepti curationem, quam tamen in seipso non habuit necessariam ? Nonne et in membris nostris sæpe pro unius infirmitate alteri adhibetur curatio ? Dolet caput et in brachio fit coctura ; doleat renes, et fit in tibia ; ita hodie pro totius corporis putredine, cauterium quoddam infixum est in capite Christi.—*Bern. Sermon. 30. de Tempore.* Facessat ergo mæror, tristitia fugiat ; eliminetur dolor ; rancor abscedat ut liceat vacare et videre cum Moysi visionem hanc grandem ; qualiter Deus in ventre virginis concipiatur, decipiatur diabolus, recipiatur perditum, indebitum accipiatur ! Totum me trahit affectio, sed oratio deficit ; dives cogitatio vocis paupertate confunditur.—*Bern. Sermon. 24. in die Natal.* Quid æque mentem cogitantis impinguat ? Nomen Jesu mel in ore, in aure melos, in corde jubilæus. Omnis cibus qui non conditur hoc sale infatuatus est. Scriptura quæ non fuerit interlita oleo tantæ devotionis, est insipida.—*Bern. Sermon. 23.* Non capio me præ lætitia, quia illa majestas naturam suam naturæ meæ carnis et sanguinis sublevari ; et me miserum in divitias gloriæ suæ, non ad horam, sed in sempiternum includit ; fit frater meus dominus meus ; et timorem domini fratris vincit affectus. Domine Jesu Christe, libenter audio te regnantem in cælis ; libentius nascentem in terris ; libentissime crucem, clavos et lanceam sustinentem. Hæc siquidem effusio rapit affectum meum ; et istorum memoria incalescit cor meum.—*Bern. Sermon. 23. in die Natal.* For all the great seeming difference among us about the grace of Christ, it is fully agreed between the Calvinists and Lutherans, saith Hottonus, Ne guttulam quidem salutis extra Dei gratiam in solo Christo Mediatore quærendam esse, &c. Quod in ipso, per et propter ipsum solum, non propter merita sua, pondus æternæ gloriæ sint recepturi, cum Deus in ipsis non eorum merita, sed sua dona coronaturus sit.—*Hottonus de Toler. Christian.* pp. 59, 60.

and with the other eye, our lost, recovered souls, and transcendent glory, these views will eternally pierce us, and warm our very souls. And those eyes, through which folly and lust have so often stolen into our hearts, shall now be the casements to let in the love of our dearest Lord for ever. Now, though we should, as some do, travel to Jerusalem, and view the Mount of Olives, where he prayed and wept, and see that dolorous way by which he bare his cross, and entered the temple of the holy grave; yea, if we should, with Peter, have stooped down and seen the place where he lay, and beheld his relicts; yet these bolted doors of sin and flesh would have kept out the feeling of all that love. But, oh! that is the joy! We shall then leave these hearts of stone and rock behind us, and the sin that here so close besets us, and the sottish unkindness that followed us so long, shall not be able to follow us into that glory. But we shall behold, as it were, the wounds of love with eyes and hearts of love for ever. Suppose, a little to help our apprehensions, that a saint, who had partaken of the joys of heaven, hath been translated from as long an abode in hell, and after the experience of such a change, should have stood with Mary and the rest, by the cross of Christ, and have seen the blood, and heard the groans of his Redeemer. What, think you, would love have stirred in his breast or no? Would the voice of his dying Lord have melted his heart or no? O, that I were sensible of what I speak! With what astonishing apprehensions, then, will redeemed saints everlastingly behold their blessed Redeemer! I will not meddle with their vain, audacious question, who must needs know, whether the glorified body of Christ do yet retain either the wounds or scars. But this is most certain, that the memory of it will be as fresh, and the impressions of love as deep, and its working as strong, as if his wounds were still in our eyes, and his complaints still in our ears, and his blood still streaming afresh. Now his heart is open to us, and ours shut to him: but when his heart shall be open, and our hearts open, oh! the blessed congress that there will then be! What a passionate meeting was there between our new-risen Lord and the first sinful, silly woman that he appears to! How doth love struggle for expressions, and the straitened fire, shut up in the breast, strive to break forth! (John xx. 16; Matt. xxviii. 9.) "Mary!" saith Christ: "Master!" saith Mary: and presently she clasps about his feet, having her heart as near to his heart as her hands were to his feet. What a meeting of love then, there

will be, between the new glorified saint and the glorious Redeemer ! But I am here at a loss, my apprehensions fail me, and fall too short ; only this, I know, it will be the singular praise of our inheritance, that it was bought with the price of that blood ; and the singular joy of the saints, to behold the purchaser and the price together with the possession. Neither will the views of the wounds of love renew our wounds of sorrow : he whose first words, after his resurrection, were to a great sinner : “ Woman, why weepest thou ? ” (John xx. 13 ;) knows how to raise love and joy by all those views, without raising any cloud of sorrow, or storm of tears at all. (2 Sam. xxiii. 16, 17.) He that made the sacramental commemoration of his death to be his church’s feast, will surely make the real enjoyment of its blessed purchase to be marrow and fatness. And if it afforded joy to hear from his mouth, “ This is my body which is given for you,” and “ This is my blood which was shed for you ; ” what joy will it afford to hear, “ This glory is the fruit of my body and my blood ! ” And what a merry feast will it be, when we shall drink of the fruit of the vine new with him in the kingdom of his Father, as the fruit of his own blood ! David would not drink of the waters which he longed for, because they were the blood of those men who jeoparded their lives for them, and thought them fitter to offer to God, than to please him.^a But we shall value these waters more highly, and yet drink them the more sweetly, because they are the blood of Christ, not jeoparded only but shed for them. They will be the more sweet and dear to us, because they were so bitter and dear to him. If the buyer be judicious, we estimate things by the price they cost. If any thing we enjoy were purchased with the life of our dearest friend, how highly should we value it ! nay, if a dying friend deliver but a token of his love, how carefully do we preserve it, and still remember him when we behold it, as if his own name were written on it ! And will not then the death and blood of our Lord everlastingly sweeten

^a Hanc gratiam Christus impertit pretio sanguinis, &c. Hanc sequamur omnes : hujus sacramento et signo censeamur. Hic nobis vitæ viam aperit : hic ad paradysum reduces facit : hic ad cœlorum regna perducit : cum ipso semper vivimus, facti per ipsum filii Dei : cum ipso exultabimus semper ipsius cruore reparati. Erimus Christiani cum Christo simul gloriosi ; de Deo Patre beati, de perpetua voluptate lætantes semper in conspectu Dei, et agentes Deo gratias semper. Neque enim poterit nisi lætus esse semper, et gratus, qui cum morti fuisset obnoxius, factus est de immortalitate securus. — *Cypr. ad Demetrian, verbis ultimis.*

our possessed glory? Methinks they should value the plenty of the Gospel with their peace and freedom at a higher rate, who may remember what it hath cost; how much precious blood; how many of the lives of God's worthies and witnesses, besides all other costs! Methinks, when I am preaching, or hearing, or reading, I see them as before mine eyes, whose blood was shed to seal the truth, and look the more respectfully on them yet living, who suffered to assert it. O, then, when we are rejoicing in glory, how shall we think of the blood that revived our souls, and how shall we look upon him whose sufferings did put that joy into our heart! How carefully preserve we those prizes which with greatest hazard we gained from the enemy! Goliath's sword must be kept as a trophy, and laid up behind the ephod: and in a time of need, David says, "There is none to that." (1 Sam. xx. 9.) Surely, when we do divide the spoil, and partake of the prize which our Lord so dearly won, we shall say indeed, "There is none to that." How dear was Jonathan's love to David, which was testified by stripping himself of the robe that was upon him, and giving it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle; and also by saving him from his father's wrath! How dear for ever will the love of Christ be then to us, who stripped himself, as it were, of his majesty and glory, and put our mean garment of flesh upon him, that he might put the robes of his own righteousness and glory upon us; and saved us, not from cruel injustice, but from his Father's deserved wrath! Well, then, Christians, as you used to do in your books, and on your goods, to write down the price they cost; so do you on your righteousness and on your glory, write down the price, "The precious blood of Christ."^b

Yet understand this rightly: not this highest glory was in strictest proper sense purchased, so as that it was the most immediate effect of Christ's death. We must take heed that we conceive not of God as a tyrant, who so delighteth in cruelty, as to exchange mercies for stripes, or to give a crown on condition he may torment men.^c God was never so pleased with the sufferings of

^b By the redundancy of which merit, after satisfaction thereby made unto his Father's justice for our debt, there is a further purchase made of grace and glory, and of all good things in our behalf.—*Dr. Reynold's Life of Christ*, p. 402. (Isa. xxvii. 4; Lam. iii. 33; Ezek. xviii. 23, 32.)

^c Q. Nonne bona effecta est mors Christi per modum objecti? Nonne summe amabilis tanquam instrumentum præcipuum salutis nostræ? R. Quod dicitur mortem Christi esse instrumentum nostræ salutis non excedere ratio-

the innocent, much less, of his Son, as to sell his mercy properly for their sufferings: fury dwelleth not in him, nor doth he willingly correct the sons of men, nor take pleasure in the death of him that dieth. But the sufferings of Christ were primarily and immediately to satisfy justice that required blood, and to bear what was due to the sinner, and to receive the blow that should have fallen upon him, and so to restore him to the life he lost, and the happiness he fell from; but this dignity, which surpasseth the first, is, as it were, from the redundancy of his merit, or a secondary fruit of his death. The work of his redemption so well pleased the Father, that he gave him power to advance his chosen to a higher dignity than they fell from, and to give them the glory which was given to himself; and all this according to his counsel, and the good pleasure of his own will.

Sect. II. The second pearl in the saint's diadem, is, that it is free. This seemeth, as Pharaoh's second kine, to devour the former; and, as the angel to Balaam, to meet it with a drawn sword of a full opposition. But the seeming discord is but a pleasing diversity, composed into that harmony which constitutes the melody. These two attributes, purchased and free, are the two chains of gold, which by their pleasant twisting, do make up the wreath for the heads of the pillars in the temple of God. (1 Kings vii. 17.) It was dear to Christ, but free to us. When Christ was to buy, silver and gold were nothing worth, prayers and tears could not suffice, nor any thing below his blood; but when we come to buy, the price is fallen to just nothing: our buying is but receiving, we have it freely, without money, and without price.^d Nor do the Gospel conditions make

nem medii: quod autem additur illam esse nobis summe amabilem, verum est; sed supposito Dei ordine, qui eam et sibi in sacrificium, et nobis in redemptionem constituit. Non sic porro intelligitur aliquid esse bonum per modum objecti: sensus enim est, illud esse tale, ut secundum se sit amabile: cujusmodi nequaquam est mors Christi, nec cujusvis alterius.—*Gibienf*, l. 2. *de Libert.* c. 22. sect. 11. p. 441.

^d Yet our crown may truly be said to be our due; for God giveth it as a righteous Judge: But it is not due as a debt upon our merit, but a gift upon a testament, or upon promise. (2 Tim. iv. 7.) So Polycarp. Epist. ad Philip. (edit. Usserii, p. 22,) saith, that "Ignatius, Zozimus, Rufus, and Paul, did not run in vain, but in faith and righteousness." Et ad debitum sibi locum a Domino cui et compassi sunt, abierunt: quia non hoc seculum dilexerunt, sed eum qui pro ipsis et pro nobis mortuus, est, &c.; because they loved not this world, but him that died and rose for us and them, they went to the place which was due to them, (*ὁφειλόμενον αὐτοῖς*) from the Lord, with whom also they suffered: and Ignatius, another of John's disciples, doth most frequently use the phrase of "worthy" and "deserving,"

it the less free, or the covenant tenor before mentioned contradict any of this. If the Gospel conditions had been such as are the laws, or payment of the debt required at our hands, the freeness then were more questionable; yea, if God had said to us, 'Sinners, if you will satisfy my justice but for one of your sins, I will forgive you all the rest;' it would have been a hard condition on our part, and the grace of the covenant not so free, as our disability doth necessarily require. But if all the condition be our cordial acceptation, surely we deserve not the name of purchasers: thankful accepting of a free acquittance is no paying of a debt. If life be offered to a condemned man, upon condition that he shall not refuse the offer, I think the favour is nevertheless free; nay, though the condition were, that he should beg, and wait before he have his pardon, and take him for his Lord who hath thus redeemed him: and this is no satisfying of the justice of the law; especially when the condition is also given, as it is by God to all his chosen; surely, then, here is all free, if the Father freely forgive the Son, and the Son freely pay the debt; and if God do freely accept that way of payment, when he might have required it of the principal, and if both Father and Son do freely offer us the purchased life upon those fair conditions, and if they also freely send the Spirit to enable us to perform those conditions, then what is here that is not free? Is not every stone that builds this temple free stone? O, the everlasting admiration that must needs surprise the saints to think of this freeness! What did the Lord see in me that he should judge me meet for such a state? That I, who was but a poor, diseased, despised wretch, should be clad in the brightness of this glory! That I, a silly, creeping,

as in the title to his epistle to the Romans, he calls them "worthy of God, worthy of eminency, worthy of blessedness, worthy of praise, worthy of faith, worthy of chastity, grounded in love and faith," &c.: and in the epistle itself he often useth the same phrase of himself, "That I may be worthy to see your face, as I much desire to deserve;" and so often he speaks of deserving his martyrdom, even through the whole epistle. This was the language of this apostolical man: yet he, no doubt, spoke of deserving and merit only in an evangelical, and not a legal sense. So Tertullian: *Non enim carnis restitutionem negavit si compensationem mercedis opposuit; cum ipsi compensatio debeat, cui dissolutio deputatur, scilicet carni.*—*Tertul. lib. de Anima*, c. iv. p. (edit. Pamel.) 418.; sic idem Tertul. lib. de Resur. Carnis, c. xvi. p. 410. inquit: *Beneficiis Deus (liberare) debet.* But all this is meant of a *debitum ex promisso gratio* only. This is evident in the following sentence: *Quicquid omnino homini à Deo prospectum atque promissum est, non solum animæ, verum et carni scias debitum.*—*Tertul. l. de Resur. Carn. cap. v. p. 408.*

breathing worm, should be advanced to this high dignity ! That I, who was but lately groaning, weeping, dying, should now be as full of joy as my heart can hold ; yea, should be taken from the grave, where I was rotting and stinking, and from the dust and darkness where I seemed forgotten, and here set before his throne ! That I should be taken with Mordecai from captivity, to be set next unto the King ; and with Daniel from the den, to be made ruler of princes and provinces : and with Saul from seeking asses, to be advanced to a kingdom ! O, who can fathom unmeasurable love ? Indeed, if the proud-hearted, self-ignorant, self-admiring sinners should be thus advanced, who think none so fit for preferment as themselves, perhaps instead of admiring free love, they would, with those unhappy angels, be discontented yet with their estate. But when the self-denying, self-accusing, humble soul, who thought himself unworthy the ground he trod on, and the air he breathed in, unworthy to eat, drink, or live, when he shall be taken up into this glory ! he who dare scarce come among, or speak to the imperfect saints on earth, because he was unworthy ; he who dare scarce hear, or scarce read the Scripture, or scarce pray and call God Father, or scarcely receive the sacraments of his covenant, and all because he was unworthy, for this soul to find itself wrapt up into heaven, and closed in the arms of Christ even in a moment ! do but think with yourselves, what the transporting, astonishing admiration of such a soul will be ! He that durst not lift up his eyes to heaven, but stood afar off, smiting on his breast, and crying, “ Lord, be merciful to me a sinner ; ” now to be lift up to heaven himself ! He who was wont to write his name in Bradford’s style, “ The unthankful, the hard-hearted, the unworthy sinner,” and was wont to admire, that patience could bear so long, and justice suffer him to live ; surely he will admire at this alteration, when he shall find by experience, that unworthiness could not hinder his salvation, which he thought would have bereaved him of every mercy ! Ah, Christian, there is no talk of our worthiness or unworthiness ; if worthiness were our condition for admittance, we might sit down with St. John and weep, “ because none in heaven or earth is found worthy ; but the Lion of the tribe of Judah is worthy and hath prevailed ; ” and by that title must we hold the inheritance : we shall offer there the offering that David refused, even praise for that which cost us nothing. Here our commission runs, “ Freely ye have received, freely give : ” but Christ hath dearly received,

yet freely gives.^e The Master heals us of our leprosy freely; but Gehazi, who had no finger in the cure, will surely run after us, and take something of us, and falsely pretend, it is his master's pleasure. The pope, and his servants, will be paid for their pardons and indulgences, but Christ will take nothing for his. The fees of their prelates' courts are large, and commutation of penance must cost men's purses dear, or else they must be cast out of the synagogue, and soul and body delivered up to the devil: but none are shut out of that church for want of money, nor is poverty any eyesore to Christ. An empty heart may bar them out, but an empty purse cannot: his kingdom of grace hath ever been more consistent with despised poverty than wealth and honour, and riches occasion the difficulty of entrance far more than want can do, "for that which is highly esteemed among men, is despised with God:" and so it is also; "the poor of the world, rich in faith, whom God hath chosen to be heirs of that kingdom, which he hath prepared for them that love him." I know the true "labourer is worthy of his hire:" and, "they that serve at the altar, should live upon the altar:" and, "it is not fit to muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn:" (James ii. 5; 1 Cor. vi. 4—13:) and I know, it is either hellish malice, or penurious baseness, or ignorance of the weight of their work and burden, that makes their maintenance so generally incompetent, and their very livelihood and subsistence so envied and grudged at; and that it is a mere plot of the prince of darkness, for the diversion of their thoughts, that they must be studying how to get bread for their own and children's mouths, when they should be preparing the bread of life for their people's souls; but yet let me desire the right-aiming ministers of Christ, to consider what is expedient as well as what is lawful,^f and that the saving of one soul is better than a thousand pounds a year, and our gain, though due, is a cursed gain, which is a stumbling-block to our people's souls: let us make the free Gospel as little burdensome and chargeable as is possible. I had rather never take their tithes while I live, than by them to destroy the souls for whom Christ died; (1 Cor. ix. 18, 19;) and though God hath ordained, that "they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel," yet I had rather suffer all

^e Ad cælestis Hierusalem non ascendunt consortium, nisi qui toto corde profitentur, non proprii operis sed divini esse muneris quod ascendunt.—*Prosp. Sen.* 31. Lege et ejus Carm. de Ingrat. c. xlv.

^f Lege Zuingl. de hac re contra catabapt. optime disserentem. Tom. ii. in Eccl. p. 47. et passim.

things than hinder the Gospel; (Rom. xiv. 13, 15, 20, 21;) and it were better for me to die than that any man should make this my glorying void. (Rom. xv. 1, 2; 1 Cor. ix. 12—15.) Though the well-leading elders be worthy of double honour, especially the laborious in the word and doctrine, yet if the necessity of souls and the promoting of the Gospel require it, I had rather preach the Gospel in hunger and rags, than rigidly contend for what is my due; and if I should do so, yet have I not whereof to glory, for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe be to me if I preach not the Gospel, though I never received any thing from men. (1 Tim. v. 17; 1 Cor. iv. 10—12; ix. 16.) How unbecoming the messengers of his free grace and kingdom is it, rather to lose the hearts and souls of their people, than to lose a groat of their due; and rather to exasperate them against the message of God, than to forbear somewhat of their right, and to contend with them at law for the wages of the Gospel, and to make the glad tidings to their yet carnal hearts seem to be sad tidings because of this burden! this is not the way of Christ and his apostles, nor according to the self-denying, yielding, suffering doctrine which they taught. Away with all those actions that are against the main end of our studies and calling, which is to win souls; and woe be upon that gain which hinders the gaining of men to Christ. I know, flesh will here object necessities, and distrust will not want arguments; but we who have enough to answer to the diffidence of our people, let us take home some of our answers to ourselves, and teach ourselves first before we teach them. How many have you known that God suffered to starve in his vineyard?

But this is our exceeding consolation, that though we may pay for our Bibles, and books, and sermons, and, it may be, paid for our freedom too, to enjoy and use them; yet as we paid nothing for God's eternal love, and nothing for the Son of his love, and nothing for his Spirit, and our grace and faith, and nothing for our pardon, so shall we pay nothing for our eternal rest.^g We may pay for the bread and wine, but we shall not pay for the body and blood, nor for the great things of the covenant

^g Antequam gratia justificetur ut justus efficiatur impius, quid est nisi impius? Quem si debitum sequeretur, quid ejus merito nisi supplicium redderetur?—*August. Epist.* 106. De me omnino nihil præsumam. Quid enim attuli boni ut mei misereris, et me justificares? Quid in me invenisti nisi sola peccata; tuum nihil aliud nisi natura quam creasti; cætera mala me a quæ delevisi. Non ego prior ad te exsurrexi, sed tu ad me excitandum venisti.—*August. Enar.* 1. in Psal. lvi.

which it seals unto us ; and, indeed, we have a valuable price to give for those, but for these we have none at all : yet this is not all : if it were only for nothing, and without our merit, the wonder were great ; but it is, moreover, against our merit, and against our long endeavouring of our own ruin. O, the broken heart that hath known the desert of sin, doth both understand and feel what I say ! What an astonishing thought it will be to think of the unmeasurable difference between our deservings and our receivings ; between the state we should have been in, and the state we are in ; to look down upon hell, and see the vast difference that free grace hath made betwixt us and them ; to see the inheritance there, which we were born to, so different from that which we are adopted to ! O, what pangs of love will it cause within us, to think, Yonder was my native right, my deserved portion ; those should have been my hideous cries, my doleful groans, my easeless pains, my endless torment ; those unquenchable flames I should have lain in ; that never-dying worm should have fed upon me ; yonder was the place that sin would have brought me to, but this is it that Christ hath brought me to ; yonder death was the wages of my sin, but this eternal life is the gift of God through Jesus Christ my Lord. Did not I neglect grace, and make light of the offers of life, and slight my Redeemer's blood a long time, as well as yonder suffering souls ? Did I not let pass my time, and forget my God and soul, as well as they ; and was not I born in sin and wrath as well as they ? O, who made me to differ ?^h Was my heart naturally any readier for Christ than theirs, or any whit better affected to the Spirit's persuasions ? Should I ever have begun to love, if God had not begun to me ; or ever be willing, if he had not made me willing ; or ever differed, if he had not made me to differ ? Had I not now been in those flames, if I had had mine own way, and been let alone to mine own will ? Did I not resist as powerful means, and lose as fair advantages, as they ? And should I not have lingered in Sodom till the flames had seized on me, if God had not in mercy carried

^h Sed nos eam gratiam volumus Pelagiani aliquando fateantur, qua futuræ gloriæ magnitudo, non solum promittitur, verum etiam creditur et speratur ; nec solum revelatur sapientia, verum etiam amatur ; nec suadet solum omne quod bonum est, verum et persuadetur. Non enim omnium est fides, &c.—*August. de Grat. Christi*, c. 10. Unde cognoscimus Dei esse, et ut bonum facere velimus, et ut bonum facere valeamus.—*Fulgent. lib. 1. ad Monim.* cap. ix. Multa Deus facit in homine bona, quæ non facit homo ; nulla vero facit homo, quæ non facit Deus ut facit homo.—*August. 1. ii. ad Bonif.* cap. 8.

me out? O, how free was all this love; and how free is this enjoyed glory! Doubtless this will be our everlasting admiration, that so rich a crown should fit the head of so vile a sinner; that such high advancement, and such long unfruitfulness and unkindness can be the state of the same persons; and that such vile rebellions can conclude in such most precious joys: but no thanks to us, nor to any of our duties and labours, much less to our neglects and laziness: we know to whom the praise is due, and must be given for ever; and, indeed, to this very end it was, that infinite wisdom did cast the whole design of man's salvation into the mould of purchase and freeness,ⁱ that the love and joy of man might be perfected, and the honour of grace most highly advanced, that the thought of merit might neither cloud the one nor obstruct the other, and that on these two hinges the gates of heaven might turn. So then, let "Deserved" be written on the door of hell, but on the door of heaven and life, "The free gift."

Sect. III. Thirdly, The third comfortable attribute of this rest is, that it is the saint's proper and peculiar possession. It belongs to

ⁱ It is a fond conceit of the antinomians, to think that justification and salvation are not free, if given on condition; as long as the condition is but acceptance, and the freeness excludeth all our merit of satisfaction. The like may be said of the conditionality of sincere evangelical obedience to the continuance and consummation of our justification, and to our salvation. In both which points, I desire those men that will not receive the truth from me, to receive it from learned Placeus in 'Thes. Salmuriens,' vol. i. p. 32, 34. I will recite but two theses, which contain most that is misliked in my aphorisms. Thes. xxxvii.: *Fide justificamur; non tanquam parte aliqua justitiæ, aut opere quod suo quodam pretio et merito justificationem nobis impetret, aut dispositione animæ ad introductionem justitiæ inhærentis; sed tanquam conditione fœderis gratiæ quam Deus a nobis idecirco exigit, loco conditionis fœderis legalis (quæ nobis carnis vitio facta est impossibilis) quod ea nihil aliud sit, quam doni justitiæ in Christo Jesu per evangelium nobis oblata acceptatio, qua fit ex Dei pacto gratuito ut illa justitia nostra sit.* Mark, he saith, 'in Christo,' for Christ is first accepted, and so righteousness in and with him; not the gift without the person. Thes. xli. About justification by works: *Id ipsum fortasse hoc ratione commodius explicabitur, opponitur justificationi accusationi: a duabus autem accusationibus premimur in foro divino. (In reference to the threatening and the righteousness of the two covenants.) Primum objicitur, nos esse peccatores; hoc est, reos violatæ conditionis, quæ fœdere legali lata est. Deinde objicitur, nos esse infideles; hoc est, non præstitisse conditionem fœderis gratiæ: videlicet fidem. Ab accusatione priore, sola fide justificamur, qua Christi gratiam et justitiam amplectimur. A posteriore, justificamur etiam operibus, quatenus iis fides ostenditur. A posteriore, justificationem respiciens Jacobus affirmavit merito, ex operibus justificari hominem et non ex fide tantum. Paulus vero respiciens ad priorem, sola fide hominem sine operibus justificari, multis rebus necessariis addixit. This is plain truth. So also Diodate in his 'Annotation on Jam. ii. ;' Ludovicus De Dieu, Phil. Codureus, and our Mead, say more for works, though I believe they meant orthodoxly.*

no other of all the sons of men; not that it would have detracted from the greatness or freeness of the gift, if God had so pleased, that all the world should have enjoyed it: but when God hath resolved otherwise, that it must be enjoyed but by few, to find our names among that number must needs make us the more to value our enjoyment. If all Egypt had been light, the Israelites should not have had the less; but yet to enjoy that light alone, while their neighbours live in thick darkness, must make them more sensible of their privilege. Distinguishing, separating mercy affecteth more than any mercy. If it should rain on our grounds alone, or the sun shine alone upon our habitations, or the blessing of heaven divide between our flocks and other men's, as between Jacob's and Laban's, we should more feelingly acknowledge mercy than now, while we possess the same in common. Ordinarieness dulbeth our sense; and if miracles were common they would be slighted. If Pharaoh had passed as safely as Israel, the Red Sea would have been less remembered; if the first-born of Egypt had not been slain, the first-born of Israel had not been the Lord's peculiar; if the rest of the world had not been drowned, and the rest of Sodom and Gomorrah burned, the saving of Noah had been no wonder, nor Lot's deliverance so much talked of. The lower the weighty end of the balance descends, the higher is the other lifted up; and the falling of one of the sails of the windmill, is the occasion of the rising of the other. It would be no extenuation of the mercies of the saints here, if all the world were as holy as they; and the communication of their happiness is their greatest desire; yet it might perhaps dull their thankfulness, and differing grace would not be known. But when one should be enlightened, and another left in darkness; one reformed, and another by his lusts enslaved; it makes them cry out, with the disciples, "Lord, how is it, that thou wilt reveal thyself to us, and not unto the world?" (John xiv. 22.) When the prophet shall be sent to one widow only of all that were in Samaria, and to cleanse one Naaman of all the lepers, the mercy is more observable. (Luke iv. 24—27.) Oh! that will surely be a day of passionate sense on both sides; when two shall be in a bed, and two in the field; the one taken, and the other forsaken. For a Christian, who is conscious of his own undeserving and ill-deserving, to see his companion in sin perish, his neighbour, kinsman, father, mother, wife, child, for ever in hell, while he is preferred among the blessed; to see other men's sins eternally

plagued, while his are all pardoned;^k to see those that were wont to sit with us in the same seat, and eat with us at the table, and join with us in the same duties, now to lie tormented in those flames, while we are triumphing in divine praises; that Lot must leave his sons-in-law in the flames of Sodom, and the wife of his bosom as a monument of divine vengeance, and escape with his two daughters alone; here is choosing, distinguishing mercy! Therefore, the Scripture seems to affirm, that as the damned souls shall, from hell, see the saint's happiness, to increase their own torments, so shall the blessed, from heaven, behold the wicked's misery to the increase of their own joy; and as they looked on the dead bodies of Christ's two witnesses, slain in the streets, and they that dwelt on the earth rejoiced over them and made merry, (Rev. xi. 10,) and as the wicked here behold the calamities of God's people with gladness, so shall the saints look down upon them in the burning lake, and in the sense of their own happiness, and in the approbation of God's just proceedings, they shall rejoice and sing, "Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast thus judged; for they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink, for they are worthy. Allelujah, salvation, and glory, and honour, and power to our God; for true and righteous are his judgments." (Rev. xvi. 5, 6.) And as the command is over Babylon, so will it be over all the condemned souls, "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her." (Rev. xviii. 20, and xix. 7, 8.) By this time the impenitent world will see a reason for the saints' singularity while they were on earth, and will be able to answer their own demands, Why must you be more holy than your neighbours? even because they would fain be more happy than their neighbours: and why cannot you do as others, and live as the world about you? even because they are full loth to speed as those others, or to be damned with the world about them. Sincere singularity in holiness, is, by this time, known to be neither hypocrisy nor folly. If to be singular in that glory be so desirable, surely to be singular in godly living is not contemptible. As every one of them knows his own sore, and his own grief, so shall every one of them feel his own joy:

^k We shall there look upon them for ever who gazed on us for a time; and the short fruit of cruel eyes beholding us in persecution shall be then recompensed with our everlasting beholding them in their sufferings.—*Cyp. ad Demetri.* s. xxi. p. 330.

and if they can now call Christ their own, and call God their own God, how much more then upon their full possession of him ! for as he takes his people for his inheritance, so will he himself be the inheritance of his people for ever. (2 Chron. vi. 29 ; Psal. xvi. 5, xxxiii. 12, lxvii. 6, and lxxviii. 71.)

Sect. IV. A fourth comfortable adjunct of this rest is, that it is the fellowship of the blessed saints and angels of God. Not so singular will the Christian be, as to be solitary. Though it be proper to the saints only, yet is it common to all the saints ; for what is it but an association of blessed spirits in God ; a corporation of perfected saints, whereof Christ is the head ; the communion of saints completed ? Nor doth this make those joys to be therefore mediate, derived by creatures to us, as here ; for all the lines may be drawn from the centre, and not from each other, and yet their collocation make them more comely than one alone could be. Though the strings receive not their sound and sweetness from each other, yet their concurrence causeth that harmony which could not be by one alone ; for those that have prayed, and fasted, and wept, and watched, and waited together, now to joy, and enjoy, and praise together, methinks should much advance their pleasure.¹ Whatsoever it will be upon the great change, that will be in our natures perfected ; sure I am, according to the present temperature of the most sanctified human affections, it would affect accordingly : and he who mentioneth the qualifications of our happiness on purpose that our joy may be full, and maketh so oft mention of our consociation and conjunction in his praises, sure doth hereby intimate to us that this will be some advantage to our joys. Certain I am of this, fellow-Christians, that as we have been together in the labour, duty, danger, and distress, so shall we be in the great recompense and deliverance ; and as we have been scorned and despised, so shall we be crowned and honoured together ; and we who have gone through the day of sadness, shall enjoy together that day of gladness ; and those who have been with us in

¹ Verissimum certe est, Deum qui sufficit sibi, sufficere quoque sanctis suis ; qui hoc verum arbitratur, eam sententiam amplectetur oportet, sanctos nihil amare extra Deum ; amare quidem alia a Deo, amare illa quæ sunt extra Deum ; sed ita ut amoris illius Divina Bonitas, non ea quæ creaturarum propria, principium sit. Qui secus de sanctis existimant, et satis esse censent eos amare quæcunque amant, propter Deum, etsi præter et extra Deum, irrogant illis non mediocrem injuriam : non enim patiuntur beatorum mentes totas in Deo quiescere et abscondi : sed partem inde abstrahunt ; aliquid earum extra Deum versari contententes.—*Gibieuf*, l. ii. c. 27. s. vii. p. 484.

persecution and prison, shall be with us also in that palace of consolation. Can the wilful world say, If our forefathers and friends be all in hell, we will venture there too? ^m And may not the Christian say, on better grounds, Seeing my faithful friends are gone before me to heaven, I am much the more willing to be there too? Oh! the blessed day, dear friends, when we that were wont to enquire together, and hear of heaven, and talk of heaven together, shall then live in heaven together; when we who were wont to complain to one another, and open our doubts to one another, and our fears, whether ever we should come there or no, shall then rejoice with one another, and triumph over those doubts and fears; when we who were wont formerly, in private, to meet together for mutual edification, shall now, most publicly, be conjoined in the same consolation. Those same disciples, who were wont to meet in a private house for fear of the Jews, are now met in the celestial habitation without fear; and as their fear then did cause them to shut the door against their enemies, so will God's justice shut it now. Oh! when I look in the faces of the precious people of God, and believingly think of this day, what a refreshing thought is it! Shall we not there remember, think you, the pikes which we passed through here; our fellowship in duty and in sufferings; how oft our groans made, as it were, one sound, our conjunct tears but one stream, and our conjunct desires but one prayer? and now all our praises shall make up one melody, and all our churches one church, and all ourselves but one body; for we shall be one in Christ, even as he and the Father are one. It is true we must be very careful in this case, that, in our thoughts, we look not for that in the saints which is alone in Christ, and that we give them not his own prerogative, nor expect too great a part of our comfort in the fruition of them: we are prone enough to this kind of idolatry. But, yet, he who commands us so to love them now, will give us leave, in the same subordination to himself, to love them then, when himself hath made them much more lovely: and if we may love them, we shall surely rejoice in them; for love and enjoyment cannot stand

^m Socrates Critoni vehementer suadenti ut si vitam ipse suam negligeret, certe liberis etiam tum parvulis et amicis ab ipso pendentibus servaret iucolumem: Liberi, inquit, Deo qui mihi eos dedit, curæ erunt: amicos hinc discedens inveniam, vobis aut similes aut etiam meliores, ne vestra quidem consuetudine diu cariturus quandoquidem vos brevi eodem estis commigraturi. —*Erasm. Apoth.* l. iii. ex *Platon. Zenophon.*

without an answerable joy. If the forethought of sitting down with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, may be our lawful joy, then how much more that real sight and actual possession ! It cannot choose but be comfortable to me to think of that day, when I shall join with Moses in his song, with David in his psalms of praise, and with all the redeemed in the song of the Lamb for ever ; when we shall see Enoch walking with God, Noah enjoying the end of his singularity, Joseph of his integrity, Job of his patience, Hezekiah of his uprightness, and all the saints the end of their faith. Will it be nothing conducive to the completing of our comforts, to live eternally with Peter, Paul, Austin, Chrysostom, Jerome, Wickliffe, Luther, Zuinglius, Calvin, Beza, Bullinger, Zanchius, Paræus, Piscator, Camero ; with Hooper, Bradford, Latimer, Glover, Saunders, Philpot, with Reighnolds, Whitaker, Cartwright, Brightman, Bayne, Bradshaw, Bolton, Ball, Hildersham, Pemble, Twisse, Ames, Preston, Sibbs ? “ *O fœlicem diem (said holy Grynæus) quam ad illud animarum concilium proficiscar, et ex hac turba colluvione discedam !* ” ⁿ O happy day, when I shall depart out of this crowd and sink, and go to that same council of souls ! I know that Christ is all in all ; and that it is the presence of God that maketh heaven to be heaven. But, yet, it much sweeteneth the thoughts of that place to me, to remember that there are such a multitude of my most dear and precious friends in Christ ; with whom I took sweet counsel, and with whom I went up to the house of God ; who walked with me in the fear of God, and integrity of their hearts : in the face of whose conversations there was written the name of Christ ; whose sweet and sensible mention of his excellencies hath made my heart to burn within me. To think such a friend, that died at such a time, and such a one at another time ; Oh ! what a number of them could I name ; and that all these are entered into rest ; and we shall surely go to them, but they shall not return to us. It is a question with some, whether we shall know each other in heaven or no. Surely, there shall no knowledge cease which now we have, but only that which implieth our imperfection ; and what imperfection can this imply ?

ⁿ Junius writeth in his life, of a man that so esteemed him, that he digged up a turf of the ground where he stood, and carried it home ; how, then, should we love the habitation of the saints in light ! By this example you may see how worshipping of saints, relics, shrines, images, was brought in by honest zeal (misguided).

Nay, our present knowledge shall be increased beyond belief. (2 Cor. v. 16.) It shall indeed be done away, but as the light of candles and stars is done away, by the rising of the sun; which is more properly a doing away of our ignorance than of our knowledge: indeed, we shall not know each other after the flesh; nor by stature, voice, colour, complexion, visage, or outward shape. If we had so known Christ, we should know him no more; nor by parts and gifts of learning, nor titles of honour and worldly dignity; nor by terms of affinity and consanguinity, nor benefits, nor such relations; nor by youth or age; nor, I think, by sex: but by the image of Christ, and spiritual relation, and former faithfulness in improving our talents, beyond doubt, we shall know and be known. Nor is it only our old acquaintance, but all the saints of all ages, whose faces in the flesh we never saw, whom we shall there both know and comfortably enjoy. Luther, in his last sickness, being asked his judgment,^o whether we shall know one another in heaven, answered thus, “*Quid accidit Adamo? Nunquam ille viderat Evam,*” &c., *i. e.* How was it with Adam? He had never seen Eve: yet he asketh not, who she was, or whence she came; but saith, ‘She is flesh of my flesh, and bone of my bone.’ And how knew he that? Why, being full of the Holy Ghost, and indued with the true knowledge of God, he so pronounced. After the same sort shall we be renewed by Christ in another life, and we shall know our parents, wives, children, &c. much more perfectly than Adam did then know Eve; yea, and angels as well as saints, will be our blessed acquaintance and sweet associates. We have every one now our own angels, then beholding our Father’s face; and those who now are willingly ministering spirits for our good, will willingly then be our companions in joy for the perfecting of our good; and they who had such joy in heaven for our conversion, will gladly rejoice with us in our glorification. I think, Christian, this will be a more honourable assembly than ever you beheld; and a more happy society than you were ever of before. Then we shall truly say, as David, “I am a companion of all them that fear thee: when we are come to Mount Sion, and the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels; to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant,

^o Melch. Adam in vita Luth.

and to the blood of sprinkling." (Acts xii. 15 ; Matt. xviii. 10 ; Luke xv. 10, and xvi. 22 ; Heb. i. 7, &c., and xii. 22—24 ; Psal. cxix. 16.) We are come thither already in respect of title, and of earnest and first-fruits ; but we shall then come into the full possession. O beloved, if it be a happiness to live with the saints in their imperfection, when they have sin to im-bitter, as well as holiness to sweeten their society, what will it be to live with them in their perfection, where saints are wholly and only saints ; if it be a delight to hear them pray or preach, what will it be to hear them praise ; if we thought ourselves in the suburbs of heaven when we heard them set forth the beauty of our Lord, and speak of the excellencies of his kingdom, what a day will it be when we shall join with them in praises to our Lord in and for that kingdom ! Now we have corruption, and they have corruption ; and we are more apt to set awork each other's corruption than our graces ; and so lose the benefit of their company while we do enjoy it, because we know not how to make use of a saint : but then it will not be so. Now we spend many an hour which might be profitable, in a dull, silent looking on each other, or else in vain and common conference ; but then it will not be so. Now the best do know but in part, and therefore can instruct and help us but in part ; but then we shall, with them, make up one perfect man. So then, I conclude, this is one singular excellency of the rest of heaven, that we are " fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." (Eph. ii. 19.)

Sect. V. Fifthly, Another excellent property of our rest will be, that the joys of it are immediately from God. Nor doth this contradict the former, as I have before made plain. Whether Christ, who is God as well as man, shall be the conveyer of all from the divine nature to us ; and whether the giving up the kingdom to the Father do imply the ceasing of the Mediator's office ; or whether he shall be Mediator *fruitionis*, as well as *acquisitionis* ; are questions which I will not now attempt to handle. But this is sure : we shall see God face to face, and stand continually in his presence, and consequently derive our life and comfort immediately from him. Whether God will make use of any creatures for our service then ; or, if any, of what creatures, and what use, is more than I yet know. It seems that the creature shall have a day of deliverance, and that into the glorious liberty of the sons of God : (Rom. viii. 21 :) but whether this before, or at the great and full de-

liverance, or whether to endure to eternity, or to what particular employment they shall be continued, are questions yet too hard for me. When God speaks them plainer, and mine understanding is made clearer, then I may know these: but it is certain that at least our most and great joys will be immediate, if not all. Now, we have nothing at all immediately, but at the second, or third, or fourth, or fifth hand, or how many, who knows? From the earth, from man, from sun and moon, from the influence of the planets, from the ministration of angels, and from the Spirit and Christ; and, doubtless, the further the stream runs from the fountain, the more impure it is. It gathers some defilement from every unclean channel it passeth through. Though it savours not, in the hand of angels, of the imperfection of sinners, yet it doth of the imperfection of creatures; and as it comes from man it savours of both. How quick and piercing is the word in itself! yet many times it never enters, being managed by a feeble arm. Oh! what weight and worth is there in every passage of the blessed Gospel! enough, one would think, to enter and force the dullest soul, and wholly possess its thoughts and affections: and yet how oft doth it fall as water upon a stone; and how easily can our hearts sleep out a sermon time; and much because these words of life do die in the delivery, and the fruit of our conception is almost still-born!^p Our people's spirits remain congealed, while we who are intrusted with the word that should melt them, do suffer it to freeze between our lips. We speak, indeed, of soul-concerning truths, and set before them life and death; but it is with such self-seeking affectation, and in such a lazy, formal, customary strain, like the pace the Spaniard rides, that the people little think we are in good sadness, or that our hearts do mean as our tongues do speak. I have heard of some tongues that can lick a coal of fire till it be cold. I fear these tongues are in most of our mouths, and that the breath that is given us to blow up this fire, till it flame in our people's

^p *Quoniam enim sistendo in gradu naturæ; creatura rationalis præsertim, habeat ordinem ad Deum; possitque illum et nosse, et amare; non nisi tamen in creaturis id potest. Amat Deum; sed quem cognoscit, et ut illi per lumen naturæ proponitur; cognoscit autem illum duntaxat in creaturis; tum in seipso tum in aliis. At in ordine gratiæ, novit Deum ut in se est, et illi immediate et non per creaturas unitur; unde procedit ejus immobilitas sive immutabilitas, et beata æternitas quam perfectam et integram habet in statu gloriæ: cum alioqui creaturæ omnes in propria quoque specie proprioque ordine sint mobiles possuntque deficere, &c.—Gibieuf. lib. 2. de Libert. Dei, cap. 27. sect. ii. p. 487.*

souls, is rather used to blow it out. Such preaching is it that hath brought the most to hear sermons, as they say their creed and *pater-nosters*, even as a few good words of course. How many a cold and mean sermon that yet contains most precious truths ! The things of God which we handle are divine ; but our manner of handling too human : and there is little or none that ever we touch, but will leave the print of our fingers behind us ; but if God should speak this word himself, it would be a piercing, melting word indeed. How full of comfort are the Gospel promises ! yet do we oft so heartlessly declare them, that the broken, bleeding-hearted saints, are much debarred of their joys. Christ is indeed a precious pearl, but oft held forth in leprous hands : and thus do we disgrace the riches of the Gospel, when it is the work of our calling to make it honourable in the eyes of men ; and we dim the glory of that jewel by our dull and low expressions, and dunghill conversations, whose lustre we do pretend to discover, while the hearers judge of it by our expressions, and not its genuine proper worth. The truth is, the best of men do but apprehend but little of what God, in his word, expresseth, and what they do apprehend they are unable to utter. Human language is not so copious as the heart's conceivings are ; and what we possibly might declare, yet through our own unbelief, stupidity, laziness, and other corruptions, we usually fail in ; and what we do declare, yet the darkness of our people's understandings, and the sad senselessness of their hearts, do usually shut out and make void. So that as all the works of God are perfect in their season, as he is perfect ; so are all the works of man, as himself, imperfect : and those which God performeth by the hand of man, will too much savour of the instrument. If an angel from heaven should preach the Gospel, yet could he not deliver it according to its glory ; much less we, who never saw what they have seen, and keep this treasure in earthen vessels. The comforts that flow through sermons, through sacraments, through reading, and company, and conference, and creatures, are but half comforts ; and the life that comes by these is but half a life, in comparison of those which the Almighty shall speak with his own mouth, and reach forth to us with his own hand. The Christian knows by experience, now, that his most immediate joys are his sweetest joys : those which have least of man, and are most directly from the Spirit. That is one reason, as I conceive, why Christians who are much in secret prayer, and in meditation and

ontemplation, rather than they who are more in hearing, reading, and conference, are men of greatest life and joy, because they are nearer the well-head, and have all more immediately from God himself: and that I conceive the reason also, why we are more indisposed to those secret duties, and can more easily bring our hearts to hear, and read, and confer, than to secret prayer, self-examination, and meditation, because in the former is more of man; and in these we approach the Lord alone, and our natures draw back from the most spiritual and fruitful duties: not that we should therefore cast off the other, and neglect any ordinance of God. To live above them, while we use them, is the way of a Christian: but to live above ordinances, as to live without them, is to live without the compass of the Gospel lines, and so without the government of Christ. Let such beware, lest while they would be higher than Christians, they prove in the end lower than men. We are not yet come to the time and state where we shall have all from God's immediate hand. As God hath made all creatures, and instituted all ordinances for us, so will he continue our need of all. We must yet be contented with love-tokens from him, till we come to receive our all in him. We must be thankful if Joseph sustain our lives, by relieving us in our famine with his provisions, till we come to see his own face. There is joy in these remote receivings, but the fulness is in his own presence. O, Christians! you will then know the difference betwixt the creature and the Creator, and the content that each of them affords. We shall then have light without a candle, and a perpetual day without the sun; "for the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof:" (Rev. xxi. 23:) nay, there shall be no night there, and they need no candle, nor light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever." (Rev. xxii. 5.) We shall then have rest without sleep, and be kept from cold without our clothing, and need no fig-leaves to hide our shame: for God will be our rest, and Christ our clothing, and shame and sin will cease together. We shall then have health without physic, and strength without the use of food; for the Lord God will be our strength, and the light of his countenance will be health to our souls, and marrow to our bones. We shall then, and never till then, have enlightened understandings without Scripture, and be governed without a written law: for the Lord will perfect his law in our hearts,

and we shall be all perfectly taught of God. His own will shall be our law, and his own face shall be our light for ever. Then shall we have joy, which we drew not from the promises, nor was fetched us home by faith or hope. Beholding and possessing will exclude the most of these. We shall then have communion without sacraments, when Christ shall drink with us of the fruit of the vine new, that is, refresh us with the comforting wine of immediate fruition, in the kingdom of his Father. To have necessities and no supply, is the case of them in hell; to have necessity supplied by the means of creatures, is the case of us on earth; to have necessity supplied immediately from God, is the case of the saints in heaven; to have no necessity at all, is the prerogative of God himself. The more of God is seen and received with, and by the means, and creature here, the nearer is our state like that in glory. In a word, we have now our mercies, as Benjamin had Joseph's cup; (Gen. xlv. 12;) we find them at a distance from God, and scarcely know from whence they come, and understand not the good-will intended in them, but are oft ready to fear they come in wrath, and think they will but work our ruin. But when we shall feed at Joseph's own house, yea, receive our portion from his own hand; when he shall fully unbowel his love unto us, and take us to dwell in Goshen by him; when we shall live in our Father's house and presence, and "God shall be all and in all;" then we are, indeed, at home in rest.

Sect. VI. Sixthly, Again, a further excellency is this : it will be unto us a seasonable rest. He that expecteth the fruit of this vineyard in season, and maketh his people as trees planted by the waters, fruitful in their season, he will also give them the crown in season. He that will have the words of joy spoken to the weary in season, will sure cause that time of joy to appear in the meetest season. And they who knew the season of grace, and did repent and believe in season, shall also, if they faint not, reap in season. (Mark xii. 1; Luke xx. 10; Psal. i. 3; Isa. l. 4; Gal. vi. 9.) If God will not miss the season of common mercies, even to his enemies, but "will give both the former and the latter rain in their season, and the appointed weeks of the harvest in its season," (Jer. v. 24, and xxxiii. 20,) and by an inviolable covenant hath established day and night in their seasons; then, sure, the harvest of the saints and their day of gladness shall not miss its season. Doubtless, he that would not stay a day longer than his promise, but brought Israel out of Egypt that self-same day that the four hundred and

thirty years were expired ; neither will he fail of one day or hour of the fittest season for his people's glory. (Exod. xii. 40, 41 ; Jer. viii. 7.) And as Christ failed not to come in the fulness of time, even then when Daniel and others had foretold his coming ; so in the fulness and fitness of time will his second coming be. He that hath given the stork, the crane, the swallow, to know their appointed time, will surely keep his time appointed. When we have had in this world a long night of sad darkness, will not the day breaking and the rising of the Sun of Righteousness be then seasonable ? When we have endured a hard winter in this cold climate, will not the reviving spring be then seasonable ? When we have (as St. Paul, Acts xxvii. 7, 9) sailed slowly many days, and much time spent, and sailing now grown more dangerous ; and when neither sun, nor stars, in many days appear, and no small tempest lieth on us, and all hope that we shall be saved is almost taken away, do you think that the haven of rest is not then seasonable ? When we have passed a long and tedious journey, and that through no small dangers, is not home then seasonable ? When we have had a long and perilous war, and have lived in the midst of furious enemies, and have been forced to stand on a perpetual watch, and received from them many a wound, would not a peace with victory, be now seasonable ? When we have been captivated in many years' imprisonment, and insulted over by scornful foes, and suffered many pinching wants, and hardly enjoyed bare necessities, would not a full deliverance to a most plentiful state, even from this prison to a throne, be now seasonable ? Surely, a man would think, who looks upon the face of the world, that rest should to all men seem seasonable. Some of us are languishing under continual weakness, and groaning under most grievous pains, crying, in the morning, ' Would God it were evening ! ' and, in the evening, ' Would God it were morning ! ' weary of going, weary of sitting, weary of standing, weary of lying, weary of eating, of speaking, of walking, weary of our very friends, weary of ourselves. Oh ! how oft hath this been mine own case ; and is not rest yet seasonable ? Some are complaining under the pressure of the times ; weary of their taxes, weary of their quartering, weary of plunderings, weary of their fears and dangers, weary of their poverty and wants, and is not rest yet seasonable ? Whither can you go, or into what company can you come, where the voice of complaining doth not show, that men live in a continual weariness,

but especially the saints, who are most weary of that which the world cannot feel? What godly society almost can you fall into, but you shall hear by their moans that somewhat aileth them? Some weary of a blind mind, doubting concerning the way they walk in, unsettled in almost all their thoughts; some weary of a hard heart, some of a proud, some of a passionate, and some of all these, and much more: some weary of their daily doubtings, and fear concerning their spiritual estate; and some of the want of spiritual joys, and some of the sense of God's wrath; and is not rest now seasonable? When a poor Christian hath desired, and prayed, and waited for deliverance many a year, is it not then seasonable? When he is ready almost to give up, and saith, 'I am afraid I shall not reach the end, and that my faith and patience will scarce hold out; is not this a fit season for rest? If it were to Joseph a seasonable message, which called him from the prison to Pharaoh's court; or if the return of his Benjamin, the tidings that Joseph was yet alive, and the sight of the chariots which should convey him to Egypt, were seasonable for the reviving of Jacob's spirits; then, methinks, the message for a release from the flesh, and our convoy to Christ, should be a seasonable and welcome message. If the voice of the king were seasonable to Daniel, (Dan. vi. 19, &c.,) early in the morning calling him from his den, that he might advance him to more than former dignity, then methinks that morning voice of Christ our King, calling us from our terrors among lions, to possess his rest among his saints, should be to us a very seasonable voice. Will not Canaan be seasonable after so many years' travel, and that through a hazardous and grievous wilderness? Indeed, to the world it is never in season. They are already at their own home, and have what they most desire. They are not weary of their present state. The saints' sorrow is their joy, and the saints' weariness is their rest: their weary day is coming, where there is no more expectation of rest, but for the thirsty soul to enjoy the fountain, and the hungry to be filled with the bread of life, and the naked to be clothed from above, for the children to come to their Father's house, and the disjoined member to be conjoined with their Head. Methinks this should be seldom unseasonable. When the atheistical world began to insult, and question the truth of Scripture promises, and ask us, 'Where is now your God? Where is your long-looked-for glory? Where is the promise of your Lord's coming?' O, how seasonable,

then, to convince these unbelievers, to silence these scoffers, to comfort the dejected, waiting believer, will the appearing of our Lord be ! We are oft grudging now that we have not a greater share of comforts ; that our deliverances are not more speedy and eminent ; that the world prospers more than we ; that our prayers are not presently answered, not considering that our portion is kept to a fitter season ; that these are not always winter fruits, but when summer comes we shall have our harvest. We grudge that we do not find a Canaan in the wilderness, or cities of rest in Noah's ark, and the songs of Sion in a strange land ; that we have not a harbour in the main ocean, or find not our home in the middle way, and are not crowned in the midst of the fight, and have not our rest in the heat of the day, and have not our inheritance before we are at age, and have not heaven before we leave the earth ; and would not all this be very unseasonable ?

I confess, in regard of the church's service, the removing of the saints may sometimes appear to us unseasonable ; therefore, doth God use it as a judgment, and therefore the church had ever prayed hard before they would part with them, and greatly laid to heart their loss ; therefore are the great mournings at the saints' departures, and the sad hearts that accompany them to their graves ; but this is not especially for the departed, but for themselves and their children, as Christ bid the weeping woman ; therefore, also, it is, that the saints, in danger of death, have often begged for their lives, with that argument, " What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit ?" (Psal. xxx. 9.) " Wilt thou show wonders to the dead ? Shall the dead arise and praise thee ? Shall thy loving-kindness be declared in the grave ; or thy faithfulness in destruction ? Shall thy wonders be known in the dark, and thy righteousness in the land of forgetfulness ?" (Psal. lxxxviii. 10.) " For in death there is no remembrance of thee ; in the grave who shall give thee thanks ?" (Psal. vi. 5.) And this it was that brought Paul to a strait, because he knew it was better for the church that he should remain here. I must confess, it is one of my saddest thoughts, to reckon up the useful instruments, whom God hath lately called out of his vineyard, when the loiterers are many, and the harvest great, and very many congregations desolate, and the people as sheep without shepherds ; and yet the labourers called from their work, especially when a door of liberty and opportunity is open ; we cannot but lament so sore a judgment, and

think the removal, in regard of the church, unseasonable. I know I speak but your own thoughts ; and you are too ready to overrun me in application. [¶] I fear you are too sensible of what I speak, and, therefore, am loath to stir you in your sore. I perceive you are in the posture of the Ephesian elders, and had rather abate the violence of your passions ; our applications are quicker about our sufferings, than our sins : and we will more quickly say, this loss is mine, than, this fault is mine. But, O consider my dear friends, hath God any need of such a worm as I ? Cannot he a thousand ways supply your wants ? You know when your case was worse, and yet he provided ; hath he work to do, and will he not find instruments ? And though you see not for the present where they should be had, they are never the further off for that. Where was the world before the creation ; and where was the promised seed, when Isaac lay on the altar ? Where was the land of promise, when Israel's burden was increased ; or, when all the old stock, save two, were consumed in the wilderness ? Where was David's kingdom when he was hunted in the wilderness ; or, the glory of Christ's kingdom, when he was in the grave ; or, when he first sent his twelve apostles ? How suddenly did the number of labourers increase immediately upon the reformation by Luther ; and how soon were the rooms of those filled up, whom the rage of the papists had sacrificed in the flames ! Have you not lately seen so many difficulties overcome, and so many improbable works accomplished, that might silence unbelief, one would think, for ever ? But if all this do not quiet you, for sorrow and discontent are unruly passions, yet at least remember this ; suppose the worst you fear should happen, yet shall it be well with all the saints ; your own turns will shortly come ; and we shall be housed with Christ together, where you will want your ministers and friends no more. And, for the poor world, which is left behind, whose unregenerate state causeth your grief ; why, consider, shall man pretend to be more merciful than God ? Hath

[¶] These words were written by the author to his friends and congregation, who could then discern no probability of his much longer surviving, and upon the late death of some very useful ministers. *Postea enim affectione hypochondriaca innumerabilibus fere stipata symptomatibus per annos 14. laborasset, cum in longam tandem et inexpugnabilem inciderat debilitatem et contabescentiam, et demum in narium hæmorrhagiam, ad lib. 2. et inde in atrophiam, pro deplorato à medicis peritissimis relictus est. In qua tamen atrophia immensa Dei bonitate debilis adhuc supervivit ; modis etiam postea mirabilibus ex orci faucibus sæpius ereptus.*

not he more interest than we, both in the church and in the world; and more bowels of compassion to commiserate their distress? There is a season for judgment as well as for mercy; and if he will have the most of men to perish for their sins, and to suffer the eternal tormenting flames, must we question his goodness, or manifest our dislike of the severity of his judgment? I confess we cannot but bleed over our desolate congregations; and that it ill beseems us to make light of God's indignation; but yet we should, as Aaron when his sons were slain, (Lev. x. 3,) hold our peace, and be silent, because it is the Lord's doing; and say, as David, "If I (and his people) shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and show me them, and his habitations; but if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold, here am I, let him do with me as seemeth good unto him." (Psal. xxxix. 9; 2 Sam. xv. 25, 26.) I conclude, then, that whatsoever it is to those that are left behind; yet the saints' departure, to themselves, is usually seasonable. I say usually, because I know a very saint may have a death^r in some respect unseasonable, though it do translate him into this rest. He may die in judgment, as good Josiah; (2 Chron. xxxv. 24;) he may die for his sin. For the abuse of the sacrament many were weak and sickly, and many fallen asleep, even of those who were thus judged and chastened by God, that they might not be condemned with the world. He may die by the hand of public justice; or die in a way of public scandal. He may die in a weak degree of grace, and consequently have less degree of glory. (Luke xix. 17—19.) He may die in smaller improvements of his talents, and so be ruler of but few cities. The best wheat may be cut down before it is ripe; therefore it is promised to the righteous, as a blessing, "that they shall be brought as a shock of corn into the barn in season." (Job v. 26.) Nay, it is possible he may die by his own hands; though some divines think such doctrine not fit to be taught, lest it encourage the tempted to commit the same sin;^s but God hath left preservatives enough against sin, without our devising more of our own; neither hath he need of our lie to his glory. He hath fixed that principle so deep in nature, that all should endeavour their own preservation, that I never knew any whose understanding was not crazed or lost, much subject to that sin; even most of the melancholy are more fearful to die than other men. And this terror is preservative enough of that kind; that such commit-

^r Secundum quid.

^s Mr. Capel 'Of Tempt.'

ting of a heinous known sin, is a sad sign, where there is the free use of reason; that, therefore, they make their salvation more questionable; that they die most woful scandals to the church: that, however, the sin itself should make the godly to abhor it, were there no such danger or scandal attending it, &c. But to exclude from salvation all those poor creatures, who in fevers, frenzies, madness, melancholy, &c., shall commit this sin, is a way of prevention, which Scripture teacheth not, and too uncomfortable to the friends of the deceased. The common argument which they urge, drawn from the necessity of a particular repentance, for every particular known sin; as it is not universally true, so were it granted, it would exclude from salvation all men breathing; for there was never any man, save Christ, who died not in some particular sin, either of commission or omission, great or small, which he hath no more time to repent of, than the sinner in question: but yet, this may well be called untimely death:^t but in the ordinary course of God's dealing, you may easily observe, that he purposely maketh his people's last hour in this life, to be of all other to the flesh most bitter, and to the spirit most sweet; and that they who feared death through the most of their lives, yet at last are more willing of it than ever, and all to make their rest more seasonable. Bread and drink are always good; but at such a time as Samaria's siege, to have plenty of food instead of doves' dung, in one night's space; or in such a thirst, as Ishmael's or Sampson's, to have a supply of water by miracle in a moment, these are seasonable. So this rest is always good to the saints, and usually also is most seasonable rest.

Sect. VII. Seventhly: A further excellency of this rest is this; as it will be seasonable, so a suitable rest: suited, 1. To the natures. 2. To the desires. 3. To the necessity of the saints.

1. To their natures. If suitableness concur not with excellency, the best things may be bad to us; for it is not that which makes things good in themselves, to be good to us. In our choice of friends, we often pass by the more excellent, to choose the more suitable. Every good agrees not with every nature. To live in a free and open air, under the warming rays of the sun, is excellent to man, because suitable: but the fish, which is of another nature, doth rather choose another element; and that which is to us so excellent, would quickly be to it destructive. The choicest dainties which we feed upon ourselves, would be to our

^t Secundum quid.

beasts, as an unpleasing, so an insufficient sustenance. The iron which the ostrich well digests, would be but hard food for man; even among men, contrary appetites delight in contrary objects. You know the proverb, "One man's meat, is another man's poison." Now, here is suitableness and excellency conjoined. The new nature of saints doth suit their spirits to this rest; and indeed their holiness is nothing else but a spark taken from this element, and by the spirit of Christ kindled in their hearts, the flame whereof, as mindful of his own divine original, doth ever mount the soul aloft, and tend to the place from whence it comes. It worketh towards its own centre, and makes us restless, till there we rest. Gold and earthly glory, temporal crowns and kingdoms, could not make a rest for saints. As they were not redeemed with so low a price, so neither are they endued with so low a nature. These might be a portion for lower spirits, and fit those whose nature they suit with; but so they cannot a saint-like nature. (1 Pet. i. 18, 23.) As God will have from them a spiritual worship, suitable to his own spiritual being, so will he provide them a spiritual rest, suitable to his people's spiritual nature. As spirits have not fleshly substances, so neither delight they in fleshly pleasures: these are too gross and vile for them. When carnal persons think of heaven, their conceivings of it are also carnal; and their notions answerable to their own natures. And were it possible for such to enjoy it, it would surely be their trouble, and not their rest, because so contrary to their dispositions. A heaven of good fellowship, of wine and wantonness, of gluttony and all voluptuousness, would far better please them, as being most agreeing to their natures. But a heaven of the knowledge of God, and his Christ; and a delightful complacency in that mutual love, and everlasting rejoicing in the fruition of our God, a perpetual singing of his high praises: this is a heaven for a saint, a spiritual rest, suitable to a spiritual nature. Then, dear friends, we shall live in our element. We are now as the fish in some small vessel of water, that hath only so much as will keep him alive; but what is that to the full ocean? We have a little air let in to us, to afford us breathing; but what is that to the sweet and fresh gales upon Mount Sion? We have a beam of the sun to lighten our darkness, and a warm ray to keep us from freezing; but then we shall live in its light, and be revived by its heat for ever. Oh! blessed be that hand which fetched a coal, and kindled a fire in our dead hearts, from that same altar, where we must

offer our sacrifice everlastingly. To be locked up in gold, and in pearl, would be but a wealthy starving; to have our tables with plate and ornaments richly furnished without meat, is but to be richly famished; to be lifted up with human applause, is but a very airy felicity; to be advanced to the sovereignty of all the earth, would be but to wear a crown of thorns; to be filled with the knowledge of arts and sciences, would be but to further the conviction of our unhappiness; but to have a nature like God's very image, holy as he is holy; and to have God himself to be our happiness, how well do these agree? Whether that in 2 Pet. i. 4 be meant, as is commonly understood, of our own inherent renewed nature, figuratively called divine, or rather of Christ's divine nature without us, properly so called, whereof we are also relatively made partakers, I know not; but certainly were not our own in some sort divine, the enjoyment of the true divine nature could not be to us a suitable rest.

2. It is suitable also to the desires of the saints: for, such as their nature, such be their desires; and such as their desires, such will be their rest. Indeed, we have now a mixed nature; and from contrary principles, do arise contrary desires: as they are flesh, they have desires of flesh; and as they are sinful, so they have sinful desires. Perhaps they could be too willing, whilst these are stirring, to have delights, and riches, and honour, and sin itself. But these are not prevailing desires, nor such as in their deliberate choice they will stand to; therefore is it not they, but sin and flesh. These are not the desires that this rest is suited to, for they will not accompany them to their rest. To provide contents to satisfy these, were to provide food for them that are dead. "For they that are in Christ, have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts thereof." (Gal. v. 25.) But it is the desires of our renewed natures, and those which the Christian will ordinarily own, which this rest is suited to. Whilst our desires remain corrupted and misguided, it is a far greater mercy to deny them, yea, to destroy them, than to satisfy them; but those which are spiritual, are of his own planting, and he will surely water them, and give the increase. Is it so great a work to raise them in us; and shall they after all this vanish and fail? To send the word and Spirit, mercies and judgments, to raise the sinner's desires from the creature to God, and then to suffer them so raised, all to perish without success; this were to multiply the creature's misery; and then were the work of sanctification, a designed preparative to our

torment and tantalizing, but no way conducive to our happy rest. He quickened our hungering and thirst for righteousness, that he might make us happy in a full satisfaction. Christian, this is a rest after thy own heart; it containeth all that thy heart can wish; that which thou longest for, prayest for, labour-est for, there thou shalt find it all. Thou hadst rather have God in Christ, than all the world; why there thou shalt have him. Oh! what wouldst thou not give for assurance of his love? Why, there thou shalt have assurance beyond suspicion: nay, thy desires cannot now extend to the height of what thou shalt there obtain. Was it not a high favour of God to Solomon, to promise to give him whatsoever he would ask? Why, every Christian hath such a promise. Desire what thou canst, and ask what thou wilt as a Christian, and it shall be given thee; not only to half of the kingdom, but to the enjoyment both of kingdom and king. This is a life of desire and prayer; but that is a life of satisfaction and enjoyment. Oh! therefore, that we were but so wise, as to limit those which we know should not be satisfied; and those which we know not whether or no they will be satisfied; and especially those which we know should not be satisfied; and to keep up continually in heart and life, those desires which we are sure shall have full satisfaction. And, oh! that sinners would also consider, that seeing God will not give them a felicity suitable to their sensual desires, it is, therefore, their wisdom to endeavour for desires suitable to the true felicity, and to direct their ship to the right harbour, seeing they cannot bring the harbour to their ship.

3. This rest is very suitable to the saints' necessities also, as well as to their natures and desires. It contains whatsoever they truly wanted; not supplying them with the gross-created comforts which now they are forced to make use of, which, like Saul's armour on David, are more burden than benefit. But they shall there have the benefit without the burden; and the pure spirits extracted, as it were, shall make up their cordial, without the mixture of any drossy or earthly substance. It was Christ, and perfected holiness, which they most needed, and with these shall they here be principally supplied: their other necessities are far better removed than supplied in the present carnal way. It is better to have no need of meat, and drink, and clothing, and creatures, than to have both the need and the creature continued: their plaster will be fitted to the quality of their sore. The rain which Elias's prayer procured was not more seasonable, after the three years' drought, than this rest

will be to this thirsty soul. It will be with us as with the diseased man, who had lain at the waters, and continued diseased thirty-eight years, when Christ did fully cure him in a moment ; or with the woman, who, having had the issue of blood, and spent all she had upon physicians, and suffered the space of twelve years, was healed by one touch of Christ. (Luke viii. 43 ; Mark v. 25.) So, when we have lain at ordinances, and duties, and creatures, all our lifetime, and spent all, and suffered much, we shall have all done by Christ in a moment : but we shall see more of this under the next head.

Sect. VIII. Eighthly : Another excellency of our rest will be this, that it will be absolutely perfect and complete ; and this both in the sincerity and universality of it. We shall then have joy without sorrow, and rest without weariness : as there is no mixture of our corruption with our graces, so no mixture of sufferings with our solace. There are none of those waves in that harbour, which now so toss us up and down : we are now sometimes at the gates of heaven, and presently almost as low as hell ; we wonder at those changes of Providence towards us, being scarcely two days together in a like condition. To-day we are well, and conclude the bitterness of death is past ; to-morrow sick, and conclude we shall shortly perish by our distempers ; to-day in esteem, to-morrow in disgrace ; to-day we have friends, to-morrow none ; to-day in gladness, to-morrow in sadness : nay, we have wine and vinegar in the same cup, and our pleasantest food hath a taste of the gall. If revelations should raise us to the third heaven, (1 Cor. xii. 7,) the messenger of Satan must presently buffet us, and the prick in the flesh will fetch us down ; but there is none of this inconstancy, nor mixtures, in heaven. If perfect love cast out fear, then perfect joy must needs cast out sorrow ; (1 John iv. 18 ;) and perfect happiness exclude all the relics of misery. There will be a universal perfecting of all our parts and powers, and a universal removal of all our evils : and though the positive part be the sweetest, and that which draws the other after it, even as the rising of the sun excludes the darkness ; yet is not the negative part to be slighted, even our freedom, from so many and great calamities. Let us, therefore, look over these more punctually, and see what it is that we shall there rest from. In general, it is from all evil. Particularly, first, from the evil of sin ; secondly, and of suffering.

First : It excludeth nothing more directly than sin ; whether original, and of nature ; or actual, and of conversation : for there

entereth nothing that defileth, nor that worketh abomination, nor that maketh a lie. (Rev. xxi. 27.) When they are there, the saints are saints indeed. He that will wash them with his heart-blood, rather than suffer them to enter unclean, will now perfectly see to that; he who hath undertaken to present them to his Father, "not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but perfectly holy, and without blemish, will now most certainly perform his undertaking." (Ephes. v. 27.) What need Christ at all to have died, if heaven could have contained imperfect souls? "For to this end came he into the world, that he might put away the works of the devil." (1 John iii. 8.) His blood and Spirit have not done all this, to leave us, after all, defiled. "For what communion hath light with darkness; and what fellowship hath Christ with Belial?" (2 Cor. vi. 14.) He that hath prepared for sin the torments of hell, will never admit it into the blessedness of heaven; therefore, Christian, never fear this: if thou be once in heaven, thou shalt sin no more. Is not this glad news to thee, who hast prayed, and watched, and laboured against it so long. I know if it were offered to thy choice, thou wouldst rather choose to be freed from sin than to be made heir of all the world. Why, wait till then, and thou shalt have thy desire: that hard heart, those vile thoughts, which did lie down and rise with thee, which did accompany thee to every duty, which thou couldst no more leave behind thee than leave thyself behind thee, shall be now left behind for ever. They might accompany thee to death, but they cannot proceed a step further. Thy understanding shall never more be troubled with darkness: ignorance and error are inconsistent with this light. Now thou walkest like a man in the twilight, ever afraid of being out of the way; thou seest so many religions in the world, that thou fearest thy own cannot be only the right among all these;^u

^u "If a man should defer his study of any art or science till the writers thereof did fully and unitedly consent, it would be as vain a thing, as if a man did purpose his journey from London to York, but should make a vow not to set forward till all the clocks in London strike together."—*Fulbeck's Directions to study the Law*, pp. 2, 6. The writers in all sciences differ, not from the uncertainty of the sciences, but their own imperfection; yea, in history, which reporteth matter of fact, Livy against Polybius, Plutarch against Livy, Sigonius against Plutarch, Zampophilus against Dio, whom he interpreteth and abridgeth. Non est litigiosi juris scientia sed ignorantia.—*Cic. de Finibus*, lib. 2. "The best and most grave man will confess, that he is ignorant of many things," saith Cic. Tuscul. 3. Solon was not ashamed to say, "that in his old age he was a learner;" and Julianus the lawyer said, "that when he had one foot in the grave, yet he would have the other in the school." Arrogantius

thou seest the Scripture so exceeding difficult, and every one pleading for his own cause, and bringing such specious arguments for so contrary opinions, that it entangleth thee in a labyrinth of perplexities; thou seest so many godly men on this side, and so many on that, and each zealous for his own way, that thou art amazed, not knowing which way to take: and thus do doubtings and fears accompany darkness, and we are ready to stumble at every thing in our way; but then will all this darkness be dispelled, and our blind understandings fully opened, and we shall have no more doubts of our way. We shall know which was the right side, and which the wrong; which was the truth, and which the error. Oh! what would we give to know, clearly, all the profound mysteries in the doctrine of decree, of redemption, of justification, of the nature of grace, of the covenants, of the divine attributes, &c.; what would we not give to see all dark scriptures made plain, to see all seeming contradictions reconciled! Why, when glory hath taken the veil from our eyes, all this will be known in a moment; we shall then see clearly into all the controversies about doctrine or discipline that now perplex us. The poorest Christian is presently there a more perfect divine than any is here. We are now, through our ignorance, subject to such mutability, that, in points not fundamental, we change as the moon; that is cast as a just reproach upon us, that we possess our religion with reserves, and resolvedly settle upon almost nothing; that we are to-day of one opinion, and within this week, or month, or year, of another; and yet, alas! we cannot help it. The reproach may fall upon all mankind, as long as we have need of daily growth. Would they have us believe before we understand; or say, 'We believe,' when indeed we do not? Shall we profess ourselves resolved before we ever thoroughly studied; or say, 'We are certain' when we are conscious that we are not? But when once our igno-

loquor quam verius, si vel nunc dico me ad perfectionem sine ullo errore scribendi jam in ista ætate venisse.—*August. de Bono Persever.* c. 21. Vide plurima talia, c. 20, 21, &c. 24, et Prolog. Retr. et contr. Priscil. c. 11. Epist. 7. ad Marcel. et Præm. lib. 3. de Trin. Tullius inquit (nullum unquam verbum quod revocare vellet emisit.) Quæ laus etsi præclarissima videatur, tamen credebilius est de nimium fatuo quam de sapiente perfecto: nam et illi quos vulgo moriones vocant, quanto magis à sensu communi dissonant, magisque absurdi et insulsi sunt, tanto magis nullum verbum emittunt quod revocare volunt: quia dicti mali, vel stulti, vel incommodi pænitere, utique cordatorum est. De hominibus Dei, qui Spiritu Sancto acti locuti sunt, dici potest. Ab hac ego excellentia tam longe absum, ut si nullum verbum quod revocare vellum protulero, fatuo sim quam sapienti similior. Vide ultra, *August. Epist. 7. ad Marcellinum.*

rance is perfectly healed, then shall we be settled, resolved men; then shall our reproach be taken from us, and we shall never change our judgments more; then shall we be clear and certain in all, and cease to be sceptics any more.^x Our ignorance now doth lead us into error, to the grief of our more knowing brethren, to the disturbing of the church's quiet, and interrupting her desirable, harmonious consent; to the scandalizing of others, and weakening ourselves. How many a humble and faithful soul is seduced into error, and little knows it! Loth they are to err, God knows, and therefore read, and pray, and confer, and yet err still, and confirmed in it more and more: and in lesser and more difficult points how should it be otherwise? He that is acquainted amongst men, and knows the quality of professors in England, must needs know the generality of them are no great scholars, nor have much read or studied controversies, nor are men of the most profound natural parts; nor have the ministers of England much preached controversies to them, but were glad if their hearers were brought to Christ, and got so much knowledge as might help to salvation, as knowing that to be their great work. And can it be expected that men, void of learning, and strength of parts, unstudied and untaught, should, at the first onset, know those truths, which they are almost incapable of knowing at all; ^y when the greatest divines, of clearest judgment, acknowledge so much difficulty that they could almost find in their hearts sometimes to profess them quite beyond their reach? Except we will allow them to lay aside their divine faith, and take up a human, and see with other men's eyes the weight and weakness of arguments, and not with their own,^z it cannot be thought that the most of Christians, no, nor

^x Nam incautè creduli circumveniuntur ab his quos bonos putaverunt. Mox errore consimili jam suspectis omnibus ut improbos metuunt, etiam quos optimos sentire potuerunt. Nos proinde solliciti quod utrinque in omni negotio disseratur; et ex altera parte plerunque obscura sit veritas, ex altera lateat mira subtilitas, quæ nonnunquam ubertate dicendi, fidem confessæ probationis imitetur: diligenter quantum potest singula ponderemus, ut argutias quidem laudare, ea vero quæ recta sunt eligere, probare, suscipere possimus.—*Minut. Felix. Octav.* p. (mihi) 366.

^y In toto genere disputandi, plerumque pro disserentium viribus et eloquentiæ potestate, etiam perspicuæ veritatis conditio mutetur. Id accidere pernотum est auditorum facilitate, qui dum verborum lenocinio à rerum intentionibus avocantur, sine delectu assentiuntur dictis omnibus, nec à rectis falsa secernunt, nescientes inesse et in incredibili verum, et in verisimili mendacium.—*Minut. Felix. ubi. sup.*

^z Didicimus singulas quasque hæreses intulisse ecclesiæ proprias questiones, contra quas diligentius defenderetur scriptura divina, quam si nulla talis

the most of divines, should be free from erring in those difficult points, where we know they have not headpieces able to reach. Indeed, if it were the way of the Spirit to teach us miraculously, as the apostles were taught the knowledge of tongues, without the intervening use of reason; or if the Spirit infused the acts of knowledge, as he doth the immediate knowing power, then he that had most of the Spirit would not only know best, but also know most: but we have enough to convince us of the contrary to this. But, oh! that happy, approaching day, when error shall vanish away for ever; when our understanding shall be filled with God himself, whose light will leave no darkness in us! His face shall be the Scripture, where we shall read the truth; and himself, instead of teachers and counsels, to perfect our understandings, and acquaint us with himself, who is the perfect truth. No more error, no more scandal to others, no more disquiet to our own spirits, no more mistaking zeal for falsehood; because our understandings have no more sin. Many a godly man hath here, in his mistaking zeal, been a means to deceive and pervert his brethren, and when he sees his own error, cannot again tell how to undeceive them; but there we shall all conspire in one truth, as being one in him who is that truth.

And as we shall rest from all the sin of our understandings, so of our wills, affection, and conversation.^a We shall no more retain this rebelling principle, which is still withdrawing us from God, and addicting us to backsliding. Doubtless, we shall no more be oppressed with the power of our corruptions, nor vexed with their presence; no pride, passion, slothfulness, senselessness, shall enter with us; no strangeness to God, and the things of God; no coldness of affections, nor imperfection in our love; no uneven walking, nor grieving of the Spirit; no scandalous action, or unholy conversation: we shall rest from all these for ever: then shall our understandings receive their light from the face of God, as the full moon from the open sun, where there is no earth to interpose betwixt them; then shall our wills correspond to the divine will, as face answers to face in a glass; and

necessitas cogeret.—*Aug. de Bono Persev.* c. 20. Multa ad fidem catholicam pertinentia, dum hæreticorum callida inquietudine exagitantur, ut adversus eas defendi possint, et considerantur diligentius, et intelliguntur clarius, et instantius prædicantur; et ab adversario mota quæstio, discendi existit occasio.—*Aug. de Civ.* lib. 16. c. 2.

^a Prima libertas voluntatis erat, posse non peccare; novissima erit, multo major, non posse peccare. Prima immortalitas erat posse non mori: novissima erit, multo major, non posse mori.—*Aug. de Corrupt. et Grat.* c. 9, 11.

the same, his will, shall be our law and rule, from which we shall never swerve again. Now our corruptions, as the Anakims, dismay us; and, as the Canaanites, in Israel, they are left for pricks in our sides, and thorns in our eyes; (Josh. xxiii. 13;) and as the bondwoman and her son in Abraham's house, (Gen. xxi. 9,) they do but abuse us, and make our lives a burden to us; but then shall the bondwoman and her son be cast out, and shall not be heirs with us in our rest. As Moses said to Israel, "Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every one whatsoever is right in his own eyes, for ye are not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance which the Lord your God giveth you. (Deut. xii. 8, 9.) I conclude, therefore, with the words next to my text; "For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." (Heb. iv. 10.) So that there is a perfect rest from sin.

Sect. IX. 2. It is a perfect rest from suffering: when the cause is gone the effect ceaseth. Our sufferings were but the consequents of our sinning, and here they both shall cease together. I will show particularly ten kinds of suffering, which we shall there rest from.

1. We shall rest from all our perplexing doubts and fears; it shall no more be said that doubts are like the thistle, a bad weed, but growing in good ground; they shall now be weeded out, and trouble the gracious soul no more.^b No more need of so many sermons, books, and marks, and signs, to resolve the poor doubting soul: the full fruition of love itself hath now resolved his doubts for ever. We shall hear that kind of language no more: What shall I do to know my state? How shall I know that God is my Father, that my heart is upright, that conversion is true, that faith is sincere? Oh! I am afraid my sins are unpardoned; oh! I fear that all is but hypocrisy; I fear that God will reject me from his presence; I doubt he doth not hear my prayers; how can he accept so vile a wretch, so hard-hearted, unkind a sinner, such an undervaluer of Christ as I am! All this kind of language is there turned into another tune; even into the praises of him who hath forgiven, who hath converted, who hath accepted, yea, who hath glorified a wretch so unworthy; so that it will now be as impossible to doubt and fear, as to doubt of the food which is in our bellies, or to fear it is night when we see the sun shine. If Thomas could doubt with his finger in the wounds of Christ, yet in heaven I am sure he can-

^b Dr. Preston 'Of Effectual Faith,' p. 24.

not ; if we could doubt of what we see, or hear, or taste, or feel, yet I am sure we cannot of what we there possess. Surely, this will be comfort to the sad and drooping souls, whose life was nothing but a doubting distress, and their language nothing but a constant complaining. If God would speak peace, it would ease them, but when he shall possess them of this peace, they shall rest from all their doubts and fears for ever.

Sect. X. 2. We shall rest from all that sense of God's displeasure, which was our greatest torment, whether manifested mediately or immediately ; "for he will cause his fury towards us to rest, and his jealousy to cease, and he will be angry with us no more." (Ezek. xvi. 42.) Surely, hell shall not be mixed with heaven. There is the place for the glorifying of justice, prepared of purpose to manifest wrath, but heaven is only for mercy and love. Job doth not now use his own language, "Thou writest bitter things against me, and takest me for thine enemy, and settest me up as a mark to shoot at," &c. (Job iii. ; xiii. 26 ; xvi. 12—14 ; and vii. 10.) O, how contrary now to all this ! David doth not now complain, "that the arrows of the Almighty stick in him : that his wounds stink and are corrupt ; that his sore runs and ceaseth not ; that his moisture is as the drought of summer ; that there is no soundness in his flesh, because of God's displeasure, nor rest in his bones because of sin ; that he is weary of crying, his throat is dried, his eyes fail in waiting for God ;" (Psal. xxxviii. ;) "that he remembers God, and is troubled ; that in complaining his spirit is overwhelmed ; that his soul refuseth to be comforted ; that God's wrath lieth hard upon him, and that he afflicteth him with all his waves. (Psal. lxvi. 3.) O, how contrary now are David's songs ! Now he saith : "I spake in my haste, and this was my infirmity." (Psal. lxxvii. 2, 3.) Here the Christian is often complaining, Oh ! if it were the wrath of man, I could bear it ; (Psal. lxxxviii. 7 ;) but the wrath of the Almighty, who can bear ? Oh ! that all the world were mine enemies, so that I were assured that he were my friend ! If it were a stranger, it were nothing ; but that my dearest friend, my own father, should be so provoked against me, this wounds my very soul ! If it were a creature, I would condemn it, but if God be angry who may endure ? If he be against me, who can be for me ? And if he will cast me down, who can raise me up ? But, oh ! that blessed day when all these dolorous complaints will be turned into admiring thankfulness ;

and all sense of God's displeasing swallowed up in that ocean of infinite love ; when sense shall convince us that fury dwelleth not in God : and though for a little moment he hide his face, yet with everlasting compassion will he receive and embrace us ; when he shall say to Sion, " Arise and shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." (Isa. lx. 2.)

Sect. XI. 3. We shall rest from all the temptations of Satan, whereby he continually disturbs our peace. What a grief is it to a Christian, though he yield not to the temptation, yet to be still solicited to deny his Lord : that such a thought should be cast into his heart : that he can set about nothing that is good, but Satan is still dissuading him from it, distracting him in it, or discouraging him after it ! What a torment, as well as a temptation is it, to have such horrid motions made to his soul, such blasphemous ideas presented to his fantasy ! Sometimes cruel thoughts of God, sometimes undervaluing thoughts of Christ, sometimes unbelieving thoughts of Scripture, sometimes injurious thoughts of Providence ; to be tempted sometimes to turn to present things, sometimes to play with the baits of sin, sometimes to venture on the delights of the flesh, and sometimes to flat atheism itself ; especially when we know the treachery of our own hearts that they are as tinder or gunpowder, ready to take fire, as soon as one of these sparks shall fall upon them.^c Oh ! how the poor Christian lives in continual disquietness, to feel these motions : but more, that his heart should be the soil for this seed, and the too-fruitful mother of such an offspring ; and, most of all, through fear, lest they will at last prevail, and these cursed motions should procure his consent. But here is our comfort ; as we now stand not by our own strength, and shall not be charged with any of this ; so when the day of our deliverance comes, we shall fully rest from these temptations : Satan is then bound up, the time of tempting is then done : the time of torment to himself, and his conquered cap-

^c Non nobis certandum est cum umbra asini, sed cum veris militibus qui eo magis metuendi sunt quo minus videri à nobis possunt. Possunt enim nos omni ex parte incautos et quasi cæcos adoriri. Et quales sunt hostes ? Audacia promptissimi, viribus robustissimi, artibus callidissimi, diligentia ac celeritate infatigabiles : machinis et armis omnibus munitissimi, pugnandi scientia expeditissimi ; denique tales sunt quibus nihil ad veram militiam deest.—*Zanchius*, tom. 3. lib. 4. *de Pugnat. Dæmon.* cap. 21. p. 213. 1 Tim. iii. 7 ; 2 Tim. ii. 26 ; Ephes. vi. 11. Ratio est, quia Satan et omnes dæmones sunt captivi Christi : victoria igitur certa est electis Dei contra diabolum : non ex ipsis, ipsorumque viribus : sed ex Christo Christique gratia.—*Zanch.* tom. 3. lib. 4. c. 21. pp. 214, 216.

tives, those deluded souls, is then come, and the victorious saints shall have triumph for temptation. Now we do walk among his snares, and are in danger to be circumvented with his methods and wiles; but then we are quite above his snares, and out of the hearing of his enticing charms. He hath power here to tempt us in the wilderness, but he entereth not the holy city. He may set us on the pinnacle of the temple in the earthly Jerusalem; but the new Jerusalem he may not approach. Perhaps he may bring us to an exceeding high mountain, but the Mount Sion and city of the living God he cannot ascend: or, if he should, yet all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, will be but a poor despised bait to the soul which is possessed with the kingdom of our Lord and the glory of it. No, no, here is no more work for Satan now. Hopes he might have of deceiving poor creatures on earth, who lived out of sight, and only heard and read of a kingdom which they never beheld, and had only faith to live upon, and were encompassed with flesh, and drawn aside by sense. But when once they see the glory they read of, and taste the joys they heard of, and possess that kingdom which they then believed and hoped for, and have laid aside their fleshly sense, it is time, then, for Satan to have done: it is in vain to offer a temptation more. What! draw them from that glory; draw them from the arms of Jesus Christ; draw them from the sweet praises of God; draw them from the blessed society of saints and angels? draw them from the bosom of the Father's love, and that to a place of torment among the damned, which their eyes behold! Why, what charms, what persuasions, can do it? To entice them from an unknown joy, and unknown God, were somewhat hopeful; but now they have both seen and enjoyed, there is no hope. Surely, it must be a very strong temptation that must draw a blessed saint from that rest. We shall have no more need to pray, "Lead us not into temptation," nor "to watch and pray that we enter not into temptation;" (Matt. vi. 13, and xxvi. 41;) nor shall we serve the Lord as Paul did, in "many tears and temptations;" (Acts xx. 19;) no: but now they who continued with Christ in temptation, shall by him be appointed to a kingdom, even as his Father appointed to him, (Rev. iii. 10,) that they may eat and drink at his table in his kingdom. (Luke xxii. 28—30.) "Blessed, therefore, are they that endure temptation; for when they are tried, they shall receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love him:" (James i. 12:) and then they

shall be saved from the hour of temptation. Then the malignant planet Saturn shall be below us, and lose all its influence, which is now above us exercising its enmity: and Satan must be suffering, who would have drawn us into suffering, as Bucholtzer wittily, “*Ubi Saturnus non supra nos, sed infra nos conspicietur luens pœnas, pro sua in nos sævitia et malitia.*”

Sect. XII. 4. We shall rest also from all our temptations which we now undergo from the world and the flesh, as well as Satan; and that is a number inexpressible, and a weight, were it not that we are beholding to supporting grace, utterly intolerable. Oh! the hourly dangers that we poor sinners here below walk in! Every sense is a snare; every member a snare; every creature a snare; every mercy a snare; and every duty a snare to us. We can scarcely open our eyes, but we are in danger. If we behold them above us, we are in danger of envy. If we see sumptuous buildings, pleasant habitations, honour and riches, we are in danger to be drawn away with covetous desires: if the rags and beggary of others, we are in danger of self-applauding thoughts and unmercifulness. If we see beauty, it is a bait to lust; if deformity, loathing and disdain. We can scarcely hear a word spoken, but contains to us matter of temptation. How soon do slanderous reports, vain jests, wanton speeches, by that passage, creep into the heart! How strong and prevalent a temptation is our appetite, and how constant and strong a watch doth it require!^d Have we comeliness and beauty? what fuel for pride! Are we deformed? what an occasion of repining! Have we strength of reason, and gifts of learning? oh! how hard it is not to be puffed up! (2 Cor. xi. 3, and i. 12, &c.) To seek ourselves; to hunt after applause; to despise our brethren; to mislike the simplicity that is in Christ, both in the matter and manner of Scripture, in doctrine, discipline, in worship, and in the saints; to affect a pompous, specious, fleshly, service of

^d Of meats and drinks, read Clemens Alexand. *Pædagog.* lib. 2. c. 1. excellently; as also c. 2—4 ejusd. Some men live to eat, as the beasts do, whose belly is all their life; but our Master commandeth us to eat that we may live; for nourishment is not our business, nor is flesh-pleasing our aim and purpose: but our nourishment is for our mansion here, which reason ordereth for incorruptibility hereafter; and therefore we must make choice of food, and it must be plain or simple, and not such as must have too much stir or labour to prepare it, or is too curious, &c.; it being for life, and not for delights and full provision. And our life consisteth of health and strength; for both which, nothing is better than a light and easy diet, as being most helpful to digestion and agility of the body.—*Clem. Alex. Pædagog.* lib. 2. c. 1. Take heed of those meats that entice us to eat them when we are not hungry, beguiling our appetites by their deceits.—*Clem. Alex. ubi sup.*

God, and to exalt reason above faith. Are we unlearned, and of shallow heads and slender parts? how apt, then, to despise what we have not, and to undervalue that which we do not know; and to err with confidence, because of our ignorance: and if conceitedness and pride do but strike in, to become a zealous enemy to truth, and a leading troubler of the church's peace, under pretences of truth and holiness! Are we men of eminency, and in place of authority? how strong is our temptation to slight our brethren, to abuse our trust, to seek ourselves, to stand upon our honour and privileges; to forget ourselves, our poor brethren, and the public good: how hard to devote our power to his glory from whom we have received it: how prone to make our wills our law, and to cut out all the enjoyments of others, both religious and civil, by the cursed rules and model of our own interest and policy! Are we inferiors and subject? how prone to judge at others' pre-eminence, and to take liberty to bring all their actions to the bar of our incompetent judgment; and to censure and slander them, and murmur at their proceedings! Are we rich and not too much exalted? Are we poor and not discontented, and make our worldly necessities a pretence for the robbing God of all his service? If we be sick, oh! how impatient: if in health, how few and stupid are our thoughts of eternity! If death be near, we are distracted with the fears of it: if we think it far off, how careless is our preparation! Do we set upon duty? why there are snares too: either we are stupid and lazy, or rest on them, and turn from Christ; or we are customary and notional only. In a word, not one word that falls from the mouth of a minister and Christian, but is a snare; nor a place we come into; not a word that our own tongue speaks; not any mercy we possess; nor a bit we put into our mouths, but they are snares; not that God hath made them so, but through our own corruption they become so to us: so that what a sad case are we poor Christians in, and especially they that discern them not! for it is almost impossible they should escape them. It was not for nothing that our Lord cries out, "What I say to one, I say to all, Watch." We are like the lepers at Samaria; if we go into the city, there is nothing but famine; if we sit still, we perish. (Deut. xii. 30, and vii. 25; Hos. ix. 8; Psal. lxxix. 22; Prov. xx. 25, xxii. 25, and xxix. 6, 25; 1 Tim. vi. 9; Job viii. 8, 10.

But for ever blessed be omnipotent love, which saves us out of all these, and makes our straits but the advantages of the

glory of his saving grace. And “blessed be the Lord, who hath not given our souls for a prey; our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowler; the snare is broken and we are escaped.” (Psal. cxxiv. 6, 7.) No, our houses, our clothes, our sleep, our food, our physic, our father, mother, wife, children, friends, goods, lands, are all so many temptations; and ourselves, the greatest snares to ourselves. But in heaven, the danger and trouble are over; there is nothing but what will advance our joy. Now every old companion, and every loose fellow, is putting up the finger, and beckoning us to sin, and we can scarcely tell how to say them nay. ‘What,’ say they, ‘will not you take a cup? Will you not do as your neighbours? Must you be so precise? Do you think none shall be saved but puritans? What needs all this strictness, this reading, and praying, and preaching? Will you make yourself the scorn of all men? Come, do as we do, take your cups, and drink away sorrow.’ Oh! how many a poor Christian hath been haunted and vexed with these temptations: and it may be father, or mother, or nearest friends will strike in, and give a poor Christian no rest: and, alas! how many, to their eternal undoing, have hearkened to their seducements! But this is our comfort, dear friends, our rest will free us from all these. As Satan hath no entrance there, so neither any thing to serve his malice; but all things shall there, with us, conspire the praises of our great Deliverer.

Sect. XIII. 5. And as we rest from the temptations, so also from all abuses and persecutions which we suffer at the hands of wicked men. We shall be scorned, derided, imprisoned, banished, butchered, by them no more; the prayers of the souls under the altar, will then be answered, and “God will avenge their blood on these that dwell on the earth.” (Rev. vi. 2, 10; 2 Tim. iii. 12.) This is the time for crowning with thorns, buffeting, spitting on; that is the time for crowning with glory: (Rom. viii. 17 :) now the law is decreed on, That whosoever will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution; then they that suffered with him, shall be glorified with him.^e Now we must be

* Matt. x. 22, and xxiv. 9; 2 Thess. i. 9, 10; John xv. 18—20, xvii. 14, vii. 7, v. 23, and xvii. 22; 1 Cor. iv. 9, 13; Lam. iii. 45; Heb. x. 33; Isai. viii. 18; Luke vi. 22. Ignatius, Epist. ad Roman., calls his condemnation to martyrdom the punishment of the devil, because his judges were but the devil's mouth and instruments: fire, the cross, the cruelty of wild beasts, cutting off, separating, breaking of my bones, renting of my members, destruction of my whole body, and the punishment of the devil (*κόλασις τοῦ διαβόλου*); let them

hated of all men for Christ's name-sake, and the Gospel; then will Christ be admired in his saints that were thus hated. Now, because we are not of the world, but Christ hath taken us out of the world, therefore doth the world hate us; then, because we are not of the world, but taken out of their calamity, therefore will the world admire us. Now, as they hated Christ, they will also hate us; then, as they will honour Christ, so will they also honour us. We are here as the scorn and offscouring of all things; as men set up for a gazing-stock to angels and men, even for signs and wonders amongst professing Christians; they put us out of their synagogues, and cast out our name as evil, and separate us from their company: but we shall then be as much gazed at for our glory, and they will be shut out of the church of the saints, and separated from us, whether they will or no. They now think it strange that we run not with them "to all excess of riot, speaking evil of us;" (1 Pet. iv. 4;) they will then think it more strange, that they ran not with us in the despised ways of God, and speak evil of themselves; and more vehemently befool themselves for their carelessness, than ever they did us for our heavenliness. A poor Christian can scarcely go along the streets now, but every one is pointing the finger in scorn, but then they would be glad of the crumbs of his happiness. The rich man would scarcely have believed him that would have told him, that he should beg for water from the tip of Lazarus's finger. Here is a great change! We can scarcely now pray in our families, or sing praises to God, but our voice is a vexation to them. How must it needs torment them then, to see us praising and rejoicing, while they are howling and lamenting! How full have their prisons often been, and how bitter their rage! How have they scattered their carcasses on the earth, and delighted themselves in the blood of saints! How glad would they have been, if they could have brought them to ruin, and blotted out their name from under heaven!^f How

all come upon me, so I but deserve to obtain Christ.—*Ignat. Edit. Usser.* p. 86. Agesilaus dicere solitus est, se vehementer admirari eos non haberi in sacrilegorum numero, qui læderent eos qui Deo supplicarent vel Deum venerarentur. Quo innuit, eos non tantum sacrilegos esse qui Deos ipsos aut templorum ornatum spoliarent; sed eos maxime qui Deorum ministros et præcones contumeliis afficiunt.—*Æmyl. Prob.*

^f In memorial of the Irish massacre, where the number of the murdered in one province doubled all that the French massacre slew, vide Clark's 'Martyrology.' Luke xxvi. 44; Psal. lxxxiii. 4, and ii. 4. God taketh the reproaching and injuring of believers as done to himself: and what other way

have they prepared, like Haman, their gallows ! And if God had not gainsaid it, the execution would have been answerable ; “ But he that sitteth in heaven did laugh them to scorn, the Lord had them in derision.” Oh ! how full were their hearts of blood, and their hands of cruelty ; so that the next generations, that knew them not, will scarcely believe the fury of their predecessors’ rage. Blessed be the Guardian of the saints, who hath not suffered the prevalency of that wrath, which would have over-done the gunpowder treason, the Turkish slavery, the Spanish inquisition, and the French massacres. But the Lord of hosts hath often brought them down, and his power and justice have abated their fury, and raised to his name everlasting trophies, and set up many a monument for remembrance, which God forbid should ever be forgotten, “ So let all thine incurable enemies perish, O Lord.” (Judg. v. 23.) “ When the Lord maketh inquisition for blood, he will remember the precious blood which they have shed ; and the earth shall not cover it any more.” (Psal. ix. 12.) They shall pursue, but as Pharaoh, to their own destruction :^g and where they fall, there we shall pass over safely, and escape them for ever. For our Lord hath told them, “ that whither he goes they cannot come.” (John vii. 34, 36, and viii. 21, 22 ; Rev. xii. 16 ; Heb. xi. ; Matt. xxvii. 29, 30.) When their flood of persecution is dried up, and the church called out of the wilderness, and the New Jerusalem come down from heaven, and mercy and justice are fully glorified, then shall we feel their fury no more. There is no cruel mockings and scourgings ; no bonds, or imprisonments ; no stoning, or sawing asunder ; tempting, or slaying with the sword ; wandering in sheep-skins, or goat-skins, in deserts and mountains, dens or caves of the earth ; no more being destitute, afflicted, tormented. We leave all this behind us, when once we enter the city of our rest ; the names of Lollards, Hugonots, &c., are not there used ; the inquisition of Spain is there condemned ; the statute of the six articles is there repealed ; and the law *de hæreticis comburendis* more justly executed ; the date of the *interim* is there expired ; no censures to loss of members, perpetual imprisonment, or banishment. Christ is

can reproach and dishonour touch God, but as they that trouble his possessions do injure the owner ? And as to wrong the soldiers is to wrong the commander, so is it a contempt of the Lord to vex those that are dedicated to him. — *Clem. Alex. Stromat.* lib. 7.

^g *Pictos agnos adorant, vivos devorant, inquit Claud. Thaurinens.*

not there clothed in a gorgeous robe, and blindfolded; nor do they smite him, and say, 'Read who struck thee:' nor is truth clothed in the robes of error, and smitten for that which it most directly contradicteth; nor a schismatic wounded, and a saint found bleeding; nor our friends smite us, whilst they mistake us for their enemies: there is none of this blind mad work there. Dear brethren, you that now can attempt no work of God without resistance, and find you must either lose the love of the world, and your outward comforts, or else the love of God and your eternal salvation; consider, you shall in heaven have no discouraging company, nor any but who will further your work, and gladly join heart and voice with you in your everlasting joy and praises. Till then, possess your souls in patience; bind all reproaches as a crown to your heads; esteem them greater riches than the world's treasures; account it matter of joy, when you fall into tribulation. You have seen that our God is able to deliver us; but this is nothing to our final deliverance: he will recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you that are troubled rest with Christ. Only see to this, brethren, that none of you suffer as an evil-doer, as a busybody in other men's matters, as a resister of the commands of lawful authority, as ungrateful to those that have been instruments of our good, as evil-speakers against dignities, as opposers of the discipline and ordinances of Christ, as scornful revilers of your christian brethren, as reproachers of a laborious, judicious, conscientious ministry, &c. "But if any of you suffer for the name of Christ, happy are ye, for the Spirit of God and of glory resteth upon you." And if any of you begin to shrink, and draw back because of opposition, and are ashamed either of your work, or your Master, let such a one know to his face, that he is but a base-spirited, cowardly wretch, and cursedly undervalueth the saint's rest, and most foolishly overvalueth the things below; and he must learn to forsake all these, or else he can never be Christ's disciple; and that Christ will renounce him, and be ashamed of him, before his Father and the angels of heaven. But for those that have held fast their integrity, and gone through good report, and evil report, and undergone the violence of unreasonable men, "let them hear the word of the Lord; your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name-sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified; (they had good words, and goodly pretences;) but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed." (Isa. lxvi. 5.) "Your Redeemer is

strong, the Lord of hosts is his name. He shall thoroughly plead your cause, that he may give rest to his people, and disquietness to their enemies." (Jer. l. 34.)^h

6. We shall then also rest from all our sad divisions, andⁱ unchristianlike quarrels with one another. As he said, who saw the carcasses lie together, as if they had embraced each other, who had been slain by each other in a duel, "*Quanta se invicem amplectuntur amicitia, qui mutua implacabili inimicitia periere!*" "How lovingly do they embrace one another, being dead, who perished through their mutual, implacable enmity!" So how lovingly do thousands live together in heaven, who lived in divisions and quarrels on earth; or, as he said, who beheld how quietly and peaceably the bones and dust of mortal enemies did lie together, "*Non tanta vivi pace essetis conjuncti;*" "You did not live together so peaceably; so we may say of multitudes in heaven now all of one mind, one heart, and one employment, You lived not on earth in so sweet familiarity. There is no contention, because none of this pride, ignorance, or other corruption; Paul and Barnabas are now fully reconciled. There they are, not every man conceited of his own understanding, and in love with the issue of his own brain, but all admiring the divine perfection, and in love with God, and one another. As old Gryneus wrote to his friend, "*Si te non amplius in his terris videam, ibi tamen convenimus ubi Lutherus cum Zuinglio optime jam convenit;*"^k "If I see you no more on earth, yet we shall

^h De qua iniquitate sævitæ, non modo cæcum hoc vulgus exsultat, sed et quidam vestrum, &c. Quasi non totum quod in nos potestis, nostrum sit arbitrium. Certe si velim, Christianus sum, tunc ergo me damnabis, si damnari velim. Quum vero quod in me potes, nisi velim non potes, jam meæ voluntatis est quod potes, non tuæ potestatis. Proinde et vulgus vane de nostra vexatione gaudet; proinde et nostrum est gaudium quod sibi vindicant qui malumus damnari quam à Deo excidere. Contra, illi qui nos oderunt, dolere, non gaudere debebant, consecutis nobis quod eligimus.—*Tert. Apo.* c. 49. *Luke* xxi. 19; *Job* xxxi. 36; *Heb.* xi. 25; *Jam.* i. 2; *Dan.* iii. 17; *1 Thess.* i. 7; *1 Pet.* iii. 17, and iv. 14, 15; *Jud.* 8; *2 Pet.* ii. 10. Dicturus es me Manichæum; sed ut maledicus, non ut veridicus.—*August. Oper. Imperf.* n. 55. *Luke* xiv. 26, 27, 30; *2 Thess.* iii. 2. Inde est quod ibidem sententiis vestris gratias agimus, ut est æmulatio rei divinæ et humanæ, cum damnamur à vobis, à Deo absolvimur.—*Tertul. Apol. verbis ultimis.*

ⁱ Absit ut talis sit illa vita, ubi est animæ nostræ ipsa veritas vita! Ubi nemo fallit, fallitur nemo; hic autem homines fallunt et falluntur; miserosque sunt cum mentiando fallunt, quam cum mentientibus credendo falluntur. Usque adeo tamen rationalis natura refugit falsitatem, et quantum potest vitat errorem, ut falli nolint etiam quicumque amant fallere.—*Aug. Enchirid.* cap. 17. *Lege Præfat. D. Hemmingii ante Postil. de Dissidiis et Scandalis.*

^k Melch. Adam in vita Grynæi.

there meet, where Luther and Zuinglius are now well agreed." There is a full reconciliation between sacramentarians and ubiquitarians, Calvinists and Lutherans; remonstrants and contra-remonstrants; non-conformists and anti-disciplinarians, conformists and non-conformists, are terms there not known. There is no discipline erected by state-policy, nor any disordered popular rule; no government but that of Christ; no bitter invectives, nor voluminous reproaches; the language of Martin¹ is there a stranger; and the sound of his echo is not heard. No recording our brethren's infirmities; nor raking into the sores which Christ died to heal. How many sermons zealously preached, how many books studiously compiled, will then by the authors be all disclaimed!^m How many backbiting, slanderous speeches! How many secret dividing contrivances,ⁿ must then be laid upon the score of Christ, against whom and his saints they were committed! The zealous authors dare not own them; they would, then, with the Ephesians, burn their books, (Acts xix. 19,) and rather lose their labour than stand to it. There is no plotting to strengthen our party; nor deep designing against our brethren. And is it not shame and pity, that our course is now so contrary? Surely, if there be sorrow or shame in heaven, we shall then be both sorry and ashamed to look one another there in the face; and to remember all this carriage on earth; even as the brethren of Joseph were to behold him, when they remembered their former unkind usage. Is it not enough that all the world is against us, but we must also be against one another? Did I ever think to have heard Christians so to^o reproach and

¹ Two books full of the language of hell, in bitterest scorns at the ministry and discipline, thought to be written by one Overton. Non oportet nos mirari super hæreses istas, sive quia sunt: futuræ enim prænunciabantur; sive quia fidem quorundam subvertunt; ad hoc enim sunt, ut fides habendo tentationem, habeat etiam probationem. Vane ergo et inconsiderate plerique hoc ipso scandalizantur, quod tantum hæreses valeant quantum sint.—*Tertul. de Præscript. initio.*

^m Quemadmodum vero in multas et varias sectas scissa est catabaptistarum hæresis, ita in hoc omnes unanimiter consentiunt, ut prædicatoribus veritatis negotium exhibeant, et eos erga auditores tanquam seductores suspectos reddant.—*Epist. Leo Judæ ante Bullingerum contra Catab.*

ⁿ Horret animus cogitanti immania illa judicia, conatus, facta, quibus hic mundus, et ipse Christianus orbis plus satis circumfluit; impietatem specie pietatis, inhumanitatem specie charitatis, injustitiam prætextu juris, intus spirantia et foris contestantia.—*Junius Irenic. in Psal. 122. tom. 1. p. 690.*

^o Si Calvinus, quam a natura insitam habebat, vehementia ea ipse adversus perditos sophistas usus est, ut interdum etiam modum non tenuisse videri possit; rogo moderatissimos istos homines, quibus nimium incalescere viden-

scorn Christians ; and men professing the fear of God, to make so little conscience of censuring, vilifying, slandering and disgracing one another ? Alas ! if the judgment be once perverted, and error hath possessed the supreme faculty, whither will men go, and what will they do ? Nay, what will they not do ? Oh ! what a potent instrument for Satan^p is a misguided conscience ! It will make a man kill his dearest friend, yea, father or mother, yea, the holiest saints, and think he doth God service by it ; and to facilitate the work, it will first blot out the reputation of their holiness, and make them take a saint for a devil, that so they may vilify or destroy him without remorse. Oh ! what hellish things are ignorance and pride,^q that can bring men's souls to such a case as this ! Paul knew what he said, when he commanded that a novice should not be a teacher, lest, being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil. (1 Tim. iii. 6.) He discerned that such young Christians that have got but a little smattering knowledge in religion, do lie in greatest danger of this pride and condemnation. Who but a Paul could have foreseen, that among the very teachers and governors of so choice a church as Ephesus, that came to see and hear him, that pray and weep with him, there were some that afterwards should be notorious sect-masters ?^r “ that of their own selves

tur quicunque ipsorum more non frigent, ut pro quo, et in quem dicatur, paulo attentius expendant ; neque hæreticos illos spiritus ex ingenio suo mediantur.—*Beza in Epist. Præfat. ante Calvini Tractatus Theologicos.*

^p Me quoque non latet, turbulentos homines movendis seditionibus, Satanæ esse flabella, ut in evangelii odium placidos aliosque homines inflammet. Ita nostro sæculo, sub evangelii nascentis initia, barbaros homines armavit, qui legibus, judiciis, et omni politiæ bellum ex professo indicerent. Sed ab evangelio recedere, ut seditionibus obviam eatur, nimis perversum est.—*Calvin. de Scandalis.* Read Bishop Hall's twenty-ninth soliloquy, called ‘The Spiritual Bedlam,’ p. 109. Religion is torn into divisions and fragments ; the swarm is up, and settles into so many places, as without great mercy they will never be got into one hive.—*Mr. Vine's Sermon on Numb. xiv. 24. p. 23.*

^q Quod multos videmus hoc vel illo errore captos à recta via abduci, nunquam nisi justa Dei vindicta accidit ; vere August. superbiam nominat here-seon omnium matrem ; nullus enim unquam extitit erroris magister, quem non prava ambitio in suum præcipitium extulerit. Scimus Deum parvulis fidum esse doctorem ; proinde qui arrogantia turgent, eos non mirum est ab hac schola pulsos vagis suis speculationibus sursum et deorsum raptari. Quotquot hac nostra ætate à pura evangelii doctrina prolapsi falsorum dogmatum cœperunt esse authores, reperiemus omnes superbiæ morbo correptos, ingenii tormenta sibi et aliis fabricasse.—*Calv. de Scandalis.*

^r Are not the errors which are rife among us, either by infecting persons of place and quality grown into that boldness ; or by carrying away Barnabas also, crept into that credit ; or by spreading far and wide, risen to that strength ; that they do face, if not seem able to put into danger of routing, our common

men should arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them?" (Acts xx. 30.) Who then can expect better from any society now, how knowing and holy soever? To-day they may be orthodox, unanimous, and joined in love; and perhaps, within a few weeks be divided, and at bitter enmity, through their doting about questions that tend not to edify.* Who that had seen how lovingly the godly of England did live together, would have believed that ever they would have been so bitter against one another; that we should fall upon one another for the very same duties; and that professors of religion should oppose and deride almost all that worship God out of conscience, which others did before them through profaneness? Did I not think, that of all other, the scorning at the worshippers of Christ, had been a sure sign of a wicked wretch? But I see now we must distinguish between scorners and scorners, or else I fear we shall exclude almost all. I read, indeed, in pagan writers,

faith, public worship, authorised ministry, long and much-expected, and promised reformation.—*Mr. Vine on 2 Pet. ii. 1. p. 2.*

* Altera pestis est opinionum varietas et dissentio in ecclesia: quæ ut his temporibus Jesuitarum impulsu valde increbuit, ita tamen neque nova vobis, neque mira videri debet. Ut enim palatorum, sic judiciorum magna est varietas; et ut multæ facies hominum, sic et corda diversa; ut Hier. advers. Pelag. lib. 3. Dr. Humfredus Jesuitis, part 2. in Epistola Dedicatoria. Multos subvertunt, abducentes ipsos prætextu cognitionis, ab eo qui universa creavit, &c. Velut qui altius quid ac majus habeant quod ostendant Deo, &c. Probabiliter quidem inducentes per verborum artificium simplices ad quærendi modum; verum improbe perdentes ipsos, in eo quod maledicam et impiam ipsorum mentem efficiunt, &c. Nam error per seipsum non ostenditur, ne ut denudatus deprehendatur, sed amiculo splendido callide ornatus, ut etiam ipsa veritate veriolem seipsum exhibere videatur imperitiis, per externam apparentiam.—*Irenæus advers. Hæres. p. 1. Proëm.* Diligenter insistendum, ne quid ex peste quæ grassatur ex vicinia, fidelibus curæ nostræ commissis, convicti, colloquiis, et quotidianis, quæ vitari non possunt, disceptationibus affletur. Serpit enim facile contagio, et nisi malo obviam iretur, falsorum doctorum astus, et hæreticorum consortium infirmorum fidem proculdubio vitarent. Evangelii ergo præcones sese exerceant in refutatione pontificiorum, anabaptistarum et Socinianorum, &c., ab illis enim magnopere metuendum, tum quia illis permixti vivimus, tum quia eorum plerique miro quodam studio ardent doctrinæ suæ disseminandæ.—*Amiraldus de Pace inter Evangelicos Constituend. p. 246.* Yet Cyprian saith, They that live in discord and difference, and have not peace with their brethren, though they were slain for the name of Christ, yet cannot escape the crime of dissention with brethren: because it is written, "He that hateth his brother is a murderer, and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." He cannot live with Christ that had rather imitate Judas than Christ. What a sin is this, which cannot be washed away with the baptism of blood! What a crime, that cannot be expiated by martyrdom!—*Cyprian. de Orat. Dom. sect. 18. p. 315.* What martyrs, then, are they that lose their lives in war against their brethren confessed to be godly!

that the Christians were as cruel as bears and tigers against one another: Ammianus Marcellinus^t gives it as the reason of Julian's policy, in proclaiming liberty for every party to profess and preach their own opinions, because he knew that cruel Christians would then most fiercely fall upon one another; and so by liberty of conscience,^u and by keeping their children from the schools of learning, he thought to have rooted out Christianity from the earth. But I had hoped this accusation had come from the malice of the pagan writer; little did I think to have seen it so far verified! Lord, what devils are we unsanctified, when there is yet such a nature remaining in the sanctified! Such a nature hath God in these days suffered to discover itself in the very godly, that if he did not graciously and powerfully restrain, they would shed the blood of one another; and no thanks to us, if it be not done. But I hope his design is but to humble and shame us by the discovery, and then to prevent the breaking forth.^x

Object. But, is it possible such should be truly godly? Then, what sin will denominate a man ungodly?

^t Ammian. Marcel. in vita Juliani.

^u Oh quam beati erunt in illo die iudicii magistratus illi qui subditos non modo honestis legibus, iudiciis, et disciplina præclare rexerunt: sed etiam omnium maxime in hoc studium incubuerunt ut incorrupta religio apud suos exculta sit; doctrina cœlestis per fidos, eruditos, et constantes ministros sit tradita, et ingens hominum multitudo per spiritum et verbum renata in conspectum Christi prodeant, quæ tali magistratui æternas gratias agant! Econtra quam infelices qui, &c. Religionem per varias corruptelas passi sunt adulterari!—*Wigandus in Epist. ante Com. in Proph.* John xxiii. 8—12, 14. Væ mundo à scandalis. Ecce fit, ecce prorsus impletur quod veritas ait; quoniam abundavit iniquitas, refrigescet charitas multorum. Quæ sibi jam fida pectora tuto refundantur? In cuius sensus tota se projiciat secunda dilectio? Quis denique amicus non formidetur, quasi futurus inimicus, si potuit inter Hieronymum et Rufinum, hoc quod plangimus, exoriri? O misera, et miseranda conditio! O infida in voluntatibus amicorum scientia præsentium ubi nulla est præscientia futurorum! Sed quid hoc alteri de altero gemendum putem, quando ne ipse quidem sibi homo est notus in posterum? Novit enim utrumque vix forte nunc qualis sit; qualis autem postea sit futurus ignorant. Augustine, in that excellent, christian pacificatory epistle, Ad Hieron. inter opera. Hier. tom. iii. fol. 159. Leonum feritas inter se non dimicat. Serpentum morsus non petit serpentes, &c. et tu homo à feris ratione præditus, ab expertibus vincaris? Tu operam des ut feritate et abalienatione vincas cætera? et in tuo ipsius naturæ funere triumphator tibi videaris?—*Junius in Irenic. Excellentis. in Psal. cxii. tom. 1. (operum) p. 687.*

^x This was written upon the war in Scotland, the death of Mr. Love, the imprisonment of many more, and an ordinance for the sequestering of all ministers that would not go to God on their errands, in fasting and prayer, or in thankgivings for their successes. And an order made to put out all ministers from the cities, market towns, and garrisons, that subscribed not their engagements.

Ans. Or else I must believe the doctrine of the saints' apostacy, or believe there are scarcely any godly in the world. Oh! what a wound of dishonour hath this given not only to the stricter profession of holiness, but even to the very christian name; were there a possibility of hiding it, I durst not thus mention it. O Christian, if thou who readest this be guilty, I charge thee before the living God, that thou sadly consider how far is this unlike the copy! Suppose thou hadst seen the Lord Jesus, girded to the service, stooping on the earth, washing his disciples' dirty feet, and wiping them, and saying to them, "This I have done to give you an example, that if your Lord and Master have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's;" would not this make thee ashamed, and tremble? Shall the Lord wipe the feet, and the fellow-servant be ready to cut the throat? Would not thy proud heart scorn to stoop to thy Master's work? Look to thyself; it is not the name of a professor, nor the zeal for thy opinions, that will prove thee a Christian, or secure thee from the heat of the consuming fire. If thou love not thine enemy, much more thy christian friend, thou canst not be Christ's disciple. It is the common mark, whereby his disciples are known to all men, "that they love one another." Is it not his last great legacy, "My peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." (Matt. v. 44; John xiii. 35, and xiv. 17.) Mark the expressions of that command, "If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, live peaceably with all men." (Rom. xii. 8.) "Follow peace with all men, and holiness." (Heb. xii. 14.) O the deceitfulness of the heart of man! that those same men, who lately in their self-examination, could find nothing of Christ so clear within them as their

‡ In Tertullian's time it was otherwise with Christians. He saith the heathens did especially mark out the Christians by the work of love and their great liberality; 'See,' say they, 'how they love one another;' (for they themselves, saith he, hate one another); and 'How ready are they to die for one another!' for they themselves are more ready to kill one another.—*Tertul. Apol.* cap. xxxix. Alas! how is the case altered now, when the mark of heathens is so common upon Christians, and those that think themselves the best of Christians! And Justin Martyr, before him, saith, 'We, Christians, who before preferred the gains of money and farms before all, now do bring forth our private estates for common use, and bestow them on all that need: we who hated one another, and killed one another, and, through morosity, never feasted with any but our familiars; now, since the coming of Christ, we are all of one table: we pray for our enemies, and labour to persuade those that unjustly hate us, that living after the honest precepts of Christ, they might have hope of the reward from the Lord God, as well as we.—*Justin Martyr, Apol.* ii.

love to their brethren, and were confident of this, when they could scarcely discover any other grace, should now look so strangely upon them, and be filled with so much bitterness against them! That the same men, who would have travelled through reproaches many miles, to hear an able faithful minister, and not think the labour ill-bestowed, should now become their bitterest enemies, and the most powerful hinderers of the success of their labours, and travel as far to cry them down! It makes me almost ready to say, O sweet, O happy days of persecution, which drove us together in a closure of love! who being now dried at the fire of liberty and prosperity, are crumbled all into dust by our contentions. But it makes me seriously, both to say, and to think, O sweet, O happy day of the rest of the saints in glory! when as there is one God, one Christ, one Spirit, so we shall have one judgment, one heart, one church, one employment for ever! When there shall be no more circumcision and uncircumcision, Jew and gentile, anabaptist, pædobaptist, Brownist, separatist, independent, presbyterian, episcopal: but Christ is All in All. We shall not there scruple our communion, nor any of the ordinances of divine worship; there will not be one for singing, and another against it; but even those who have jarred in discord, shall all conjoin in blessed concord, and make one melodious quire. I could wish they were of the martyr's mind, who rejoiced that she might have her foot in the same hole of the stocks in which Master Philpot's had been before her. ²But, however, I am sure they will joyfully live in the same heaven, and gladly participate in the same rest. Those whom one house could not hold, nor one church hold them, no nor one kingdom either; yet one heaven and one God may hold.^a One house; one kingdom could not hold Joseph and his brethren; but they must together again, whether they will or not; and then how is the case altered! then every man must straight withdraw, while they weep over, and kiss each other. O how canst thou now find in thy heart,

² Christ that would not have us to be contentious, nor envy at wicked men, but that by bearing and gentleness we should lead others from their reproachings and lusts.—*Just. Mart. Apol. ii.*

^a The cause of all our mischief lieth in making dark points to be articles of our creed, as if salvation lay on them. Nihil pestilentius in ecclesia doceri potest, quam si ea quæ necessaria non sunt necessaria fiant: hac enim tyrannide conscientiæ illaqueantur, et libertas fidei extinguitur; mendacium pro veritate, idolum pro Deo, abominatio pro sanctitate colitur.—*Luther referente Hen. Hoffnero Saxon. Evangel. p. 110.* Mark these words of Luther.

if thou bear the heart or face of a Christian, to be bitter or injurious against thy brethren, when thou dost but once think of that time and place, where thou hopest in the nearest and sweetest familiarity to live and rejoice with them for ever? I confess their infirmities are not to be loved, nor sin to be tolerated, because it is theirs. But be sure it be sin which thou opposest in them; and do it with a spirit of meekness and compassion, that the world may see thy love to the person, while thou opposest the offence. Alas! that Turks and Pagans can agree together in wickedness, better than Christians in the truth! That bears and lions, wolves and tigers, can agree together, but Christians cannot! That a legion^b of devils can accord in one body, and not the tenth part of so many Christians in one church! (Matt. v. 9; Luke viii. 30.) Well, the fault may be mine, and it may be theirs; or more likely both mine and theirs: but this rejoiceth me, that my old friends who now look strangely at me, will joyfully triumph with me in our common rest.

Sect. XV. 7. We shall then rest from all our dolorous hours, and sad thoughts which we now undergo, by participating with our brethren in their calamities. Alas! if we had nothing on ourselves to trouble us, yet what heart could lay aside sorrows, that live in the sound of the church's sufferings? If Job had nothing upon his body to disquiet him, yet the message of his children's overthrow, must needs grieve the most patient soul. Except we are turned into steel or stone, and have lost both christian and human affection, there needs no more than the miseries of our brethren, to fill our hearts with successions of sorrows, and make our lives a continued lamentation. The church on earth is a mere hospital; which way ever we go, we hear complaining; and into what corner soever we cast our eyes, we behold objects of pity and grief: some groaning under a dark understanding, some under a senseless heart, some languishing under unfruitful weakness, and some bleeding for miscarriages and wilfulness; and some in such a lethargy that they are past complaining; some crying out of their pining poverty; some groaning under pains and infirmities; and some bewailing a whole catalogue of calamities, especially in days of common sufferings, when nothing appears to our sight but ruin; ^c fami-

^b Quibus est communis amor, his idem dolor est commune malum.—*Nazianz.* *

^c When Christ's doctrine came first into the world, it was the fruit of it, for some ages, to make people lay by war, and turn to peace; and is it not sad

lies ruined; congregations ruined; sumptuous structures ruined; cities ruined; country ruined; court ruined; kingdoms ruined. Who weeps not, when all these bleed? As now our friends' distresses are our distresses, so then our friends' deliverance will be part of our own deliverance. How much more joyous now to join with them in their days of thanksgiving and gladness, than in the days of humiliation in sackcloth and ashes! How much then more joyous will it be to join with them in their perpetual praises and triumphs, than to hear them now bewailing their wretchedness, their want of light, their want of life, of joy, of assurance, of grace, of Christ, of all things! How much more comfortable to see them perfected, than now to see them wounded, weak, sick, and afflicted? To stand by the bed of their languishing as silly comforters, being overwhelmed and silenced with the greatness of their griefs, conscious of our own disability to relieve them, scarce having a word of comfort to refresh them; or if we have, alas, they be but words, which are a poor relief, when their sufferings are real; fain we would ease or help them, but cannot: all we can do, is to sorrow with them, which alas, doth rather increase their sorrows. Our day of rest will free both us and them from all this. Now we may enter many a poor Christian's cottage, and there see their children ragged, their purse empty, their cupboard empty, their belly empty, and poverty possessing and filling all. How much better is that day, when we shall see them filled with Christ, clothed with glory, and equalised with the richest and greatest princes! O the sad and heart-piercing spectacles that our eyes have seen in four years' space! In this fight a dear friend is slain; scarce a month, scarce a week, without the sight or noise of blood; surely there is none of this in heaven. Our eyes shall then be filled no more, nor our hearts pierced with such dreadful sights, &c. Our eyes shall never more behold the earth covered with the carcasses of the slain. Our mourning attire will then be turned into the white robes and garments of gladness. Oh! how hardly can our

that now it should work so contrary, as an occasion? Athan. 'De Incarn. Verb.' saith of men of war, as soon as ever they entertained the doctrine of Christ, presently they lay by their desire of war, and betake themselves to husbandry; and the hands which they were wont to warm with iron, they delight now to stretch forth in innocency, in earnest prayer; and instead of war, which they waged against one another, they now join in arms against the devil and evil spirits, and so conquer them by the chastity and virtue of the mind.

hearts now hold, when we think of such, and such, and such a dear christian friend slain or departed ! O how glad must the same hearts be when we see them all alive and glorified ! But a far greater grief it is to our spirits, to see the spiritual miseries of our brethren ; to see such a one with whom we took sweet counsel, and who zealously joined with us in God's worship, to be now fallen off to sensuality, turned drunkard, worldling, or a persecutor of the saints ! and these trying times have given us too large occasion for such sorrows ; to see our dearest and most intimate friends to be turned aside from the truth of Christ, and that either in or near the foundation, and to be raging confident in the grossest errors ; to see many near us in the flesh, continue their neglect of Christ and their souls, and nothing will waken them out of their security ; to look an ungodly father or mother, brother or sister, in the face ; to look on a carnal wife, or husband, or child, or friend, and to think how certainly they shall be in hell for ever, if they die in their present unregenerate estate ! Oh ! what continual dolours do all these sad sights and thoughts fill our hearts with from day to day ; and will it not be a blessed day when we shall rest from all these ? What Christian now is not in Paul's case, and cannot speak in his language ? " Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches ; who is weak, and I am not weak ? Who is offended, and I burn not ? " (2 Cor. xi. 28, 29.) What heart is not wounded to think on Germany's long desolations ? Oh ! the learned universities ; the flourishing churches there that now are left desolate ! Look on England's four years' blood, a flourishing land almost made ruinate ; hear but the common voice in most cities, towns, and countries through the land, and judge whether here be no cause of sorrow ; especially, look but to the sad effects, and men's spirits grown more out of order : and is this not cause of astonishing sorrows ? Look to Scotland, look to Ireland ; look almost every where, and tell me what you see. Blessed be that approaching day, when our eyes shall behold no more such sights, nor our ears hear any more such tidings ! How many hundred pamphlets are printed, full of almost nothing but the common calamities ! so that it is become a gainful trade to divulge the news of our brethren's sufferings ; and the fears for the future that possessed our hearts, were worse than all that we saw and suffered : nay, have not many died with the fears of that

which, if they had lived, they had neither suffered nor seen? It is said of Melancthon,^d that the miseries of the church made him almost neglect the death of his beloved children; to think of the Gospel departing, the glory taken from Israel, our sun setting at noon-day, poor souls left willingly dark and destitute, and with great pains and hazard blowing out the light that should guide them to salvation! What sad thoughts must these be!^e To think of Christ removing his family; taking away both worship and worshippers, and to leave the land to the rage of the merciless: these were sad thoughts. Who could then have the harp in hand, or sing the pleasant songs of Sion? (Isa. lx. 11—14.) But blessed be the Lord, who hath frustrated our fears, and who will hasten that rejoicing day, when Sion shall be exalted above the mountains, and her gates shall be open day and night, and the glory of the Gentiles be brought into it, and the nation and kingdom that will not serve her shall perish: when the sons of them that afflicted her shall come bending unto her, and all they that despised her “shall bow themselves at the soles of her feet; and they shall call her the city of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel;” (Isa. lx. 21, 22;) when her people also shall be all righteous, even the work of God’s hands, the branch of his planting, who shall inherit the land for ever, that he may be glorified. When that voice shall sound forth, “Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that love her; that ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolation; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory.” (Isa. lxvi. 10, 12.) Thus shall we rest from our participation of our brethren’s sufferings.

Sect. XVI. 8. We shall rest also from all our own personal sufferings, whether natural and ordinary, or extraordinary, from the afflicting hand of God. And though this may seem a small thing to those that live in continual ease, and abound in all kind of prosperity, yet, methinks, to the daily afflicted soul, it should make the fore-thoughts of heaven delightful; and I think I shall meet with few of the saints but will say, that this is their own case.^f O the dying life that we now live! as full of sufferings,

^d Camerar. in vit. Melanct.

^e See Neh. i. 4, and ii. 3; Psal. cxxxvii.

^f *Maxima quæquæ bona sollicita sunt; nec ulli fortunæ minus bene quam optimæ creditur. Alia felicitate ad tuendam felicitatem opus est, et pro ipsis qua successerunt votis, vota facienda sunt. Quo altius aliquid surrexit, vergit protinus in occasum. Neminem porro casura delectant; miserrimam ergo*

as of days and hours ! We are the carcasses that all calamities prey upon : as various as they are, each one will have a snatch at us, and be sure to devour a morsel of our comfort. When we bait our bulls and bears, we do but represent our own condition ; whose lives are consumed under such assaults, and spent in succession of fresh encounters. All creatures have an enmity against us, ever since we made the Lord of all our enemy ; and though we are reconciled by the blood of the covenant, and the price is paid for our full deliverance, yet our Redeemer sees it fit to leave this measure of misery upon us, to make us know for what we are beholden, to mind us of what we would else forget, to be serviceable to his wise and gracious designs, and advantageous to our full and final recovery. He hath sent us as lambs among wolves ; and sure there is little rest to be expected. As all our senses are the inlets of sin, so they are become the inlets of our sorrow. Grief creeps in at our eyes, at our ears, and almost every where : it seizeth upon our heads, our hearts, our flesh, our spirits ; and what part doth escape it ? Fears do devour us, and darken our delights, as the frosts do nip the tender buds ; cares do consume us, and feed upon our spirits, as the scorching sun doth wither the delicate flowers : or, if any saint or stoic have fortified his inwards against these, yet he is naked still without ; and if he be wiser than to create his own sorrows, yet shall he be sure to feel his share ; he shall produce them as the meritorious, if not as the efficient cause. What tender pieces are these dusty bodies ! What brittle glasses do we bear about us ; and how many thousand dangers are they hurried through ; and how hardly cured, if once cracked ! O the multitudes of slender veins, of tender membranes, nerves, fibres, muscles, arteries, and all subject to obstructions, exhesions, tensions, contractions, resolutions, ruptures, or one thing or other, to cause their grief ; every one a fit subject for pain, and fit to communicate that pain to the whole ! What nobler part is there that suffereth its pain or ruin alone ? whatever it is to the sound and healthful, methinks to such as myself this rest should be acceptable, who in ten or twelve years' time, have scarce had a whole day free from some dolour. Oh ! the weary nights and

necesse est, non tantum brevissimam vitam eorum esse qui magno parant labore quod majore possideant ; operose assequuntur quæ volunt ; anxie tenent quæ assecuti sunt. Novæ occupationes veteribus substituuntur ; spes spem excitat ; ambitionem ambitio, miseriarum non finis quæritur, sed materia mutatur.—*Sen, de brev. vit.*

days ; oh ! the unserviceable, languishing weakness ; oh ! the restless, working vapours ; oh ! the tedious, nauseous medicines, besides the daily expectations of worse ! And will it not be desirable to rest from all these ? There will be then no crying out, Oh ! my head, oh ! my stomach, oh ! my sides, or oh ! my bowels : no, no, sin, and flesh, and dust, and pain, will all be left behind together. Oh ! what would we not give now for a little ease, much more for a perfect cure ! How, then, should we value that perfect freedom ! If we have some mixed comforts here, they are scarce enough to sweeten our crosses ; or if we have some short and smiling intermissions, it is scarce time enough to breathe us in, and to prepare our tacklings for the next storm. If one wave pass by, another succeeds ; and if the night be over, and the day come, yet will it soon be night again. Some men's fevers are continual, and some intermittent ; some have tertians, and some quartans ; but, more or less, all have their fits. O the blessed tranquillity of that region, where there is nothing but sweet continued peace ! No succession of joy there, because no intermission. Our lives will be but one joy, as our time will be changed into one eternity. O healthful place, where none are sick ! O fortunate land, where all are kings ! O place most holy, where all are priests ! How free a state, where none are servants, save to their supreme Monarch ! For it shall come to pass, that in that day the Lord shall give us rest from our sorrow, and our fear, and from the hard bondage wherein we served. (Isa. xiv. 3.) The poor man shall no more be tired with his incessant labours ; no more use of plough, or flail, or scythe, or sickle ; no stooping of the servant to the master, or the tenant to the landlord ; no hunger, or thirst, or cold, or nakedness ; no pinching frosts, nor scorching heats. Our very beasts who suffered with us, shall also be freed from their bondage ; ourselves, therefore, much more : our faces shall no more be pale or sad ; our groans and sighs will be done away ; and God will wipe away all tears from our eyes. (Rom. viii. 19—22 ; Rev. vii. 15—17. xxi. 3, 4.) No more parting of friends asunder, nor voice of lamentation heard in our dwellings. No more breaches, nor disproportion, will be in our friendship, nor any trouble accompanying our relations ; no more care of master for servants, or parents for children, or magistrates over subjects, or ministers over people ; no more sadness for our study lost, our preaching lost, our entreaties lost, the tenders of Christ's blood lost, and our dear people's souls lost ; no more marrying, nor giving in mar-

riage, but we shall be as the angels of God.^g O what room can there be for any evil, where the whole is perfectly filled with God! Then shall the “ransomed of the Lord return and come to Sion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.” (Isa. xxxv. 10.) Hold out then a little longer, O my soul; bear with the infirmities of thy earthly tabernacle; endure that share of sorrows that the love of thy Father shall impose; submit to his indignation also, because thou hast sinned against him; it will be thus but a little while; the sound of thy Redeemer’s feet are even at the door; and thine own deliverance nearer than many others. And thou who hast often cried, in the language of the divine poet, Herbert,

“Sorrow was all my soul; I scarce believed,
Till grief did tell me roundly, that I lived,”

shalt then feel, that God and joy is all thy soul; the fruition of whom, with thy freedom from all these sorrows, will, more sweetly, and more feelingly, make thee know, and to his eternal praise acknowledge, that thou livest.

And thus we shall rest from all afflictions.

Sect. XVII. 9. We shall rest also from all the trouble and pain of duty. The conscientious magistrate now cries out, Oh! the burden that lieth upon me! The conscientious parents, that know the preciousness of their children’s souls, and the constant pains required to their godly education, cry out, Oh! the burden!^h The conscientious minister above all, when he reads his charge, (2 Tim. iv. 1,) and views his pattern; (Mark iii. 20, 21, &c.; Acts xx. 18, 31;) when he hath tried awhile what it is to study, and pray, and preach, according to the weight and excellency of the work; to go from house to house, and from neighbour to neighbour, and to beseech them night and day with

^g Ἱσάγγελοι, pares angelis. Hymo expoundeth this too boldly, and I think falsely. Quod viri in suo sexu resurgent, fæminæ in sexu muliebri, erunt habentes membra genitalia, non autem voluntatem cœundi.—*Hom. in Dom.* 18. in Matt. xxii. I see no ground to conceit such a difference of sex hereafter.

^h Tunc erit in nobis vera, perfecta, excelsa humilitas, cum et in carne, et in mente nostra, nulla remanserit prava cupiditas, nec cogitationibus fatigabitur spiritus, nec laboribus macerabitur corpus. Nulla erit sollicitudo certaminis, sed perfecta erit securitas pacis. Nulla nobis erit justitiæ indigentia, sed cum delectatione securitas plena. Ibi erimus enim perfecta celsitudine beati, quia perfecta erimus Deo carnis et spiritus humilitate subjecti.—*Fulgent. Ep. 4. ad Prob. c. 7, 8.* The Work of the Ministry. Read Lockier on Col. i. 29. p. 524, &c.

tears, and, after all, to be hated and persecuted for so doing, no wonder if he cry out, O the burden ! and be ready to turn away with Jonas ; and, with Jeremy, to say, “ I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name ; for his word is a reproach to us, and a derision daily ; but that he hath made his word as a fire shut up in our bones and heart, that we are weary of forbearing, and cannot stay.” (Jer. xx. 8, 9.) How long may we study and labour before one soul is brought clear over to Christ ! and when it is done, how soon do the snares of sensuality or error entangle them ! How many receive the doctrine of delusion before they have time to be built up in the truth ; and when heresies must of necessity arise, how few of them do appear approved ! The first new, strange apparition of light doth so amaze them, they think they are in the third heaven, when they are but newly passed from the suburbs of hell, and are presently as confident as if they knew all things, when they have not half light enough to acquaint them with their ignorance ; but, after ten or twenty years’ study, they become usually of the same judgment with those they despised. And seldom doth a minister live to see the ripeness of his people ; but one soweth and planteth, another watereth, and a third reapeth and receiveth the increase. Yet were all this duty delightful, had we but a true proportion of strength. But, to inform the old ignorant sinner, to convince the stubborn and worldly wise, to persuade a wilful resolved wretch, to prick a stony heart to the quick, to make a rock to weep and tremble, to set forth Christ according to our necessity and his excellency, to comfort the soul whom God dejected, to clear up dark and difficult truths, to oppose with convincing arguments all gainsayers, to credit the Gospel with exemplary conversations, when multitudes do but watch for our halting ; Oh ! who is sufficient for these things ? So that every relation, state, age, hath variety of duty : every conscientious Christian cries out, O the burden ! or, O my weakness that makes it so burdensome ! But our remaining rest will ease us of the burden. Then will that be sound doctrine, which now is false, that the law hath no more to do with us ; that it becomes not a Christian to beg for pardon, seeing all his sins are perfectly pardoned already ; that we need not fast, nor mourn, nor weep, nor repent ; and that a sorrowful countenance beseems not a Christian : then will all these become truths.

Sect. XVIII. 10. And, lastly, we shall rest from all those sad affections which necessarily accompany our absence from God ;

the trouble that is mixed in our desires and hopes, our longings and waitings, shall then cease. We shall no more look into our cabinet, and miss our treasure ; look into our hearts, and miss our Christ ; nor no more seek him from ordinance to ordinance, and inquire for our God of those we meet ; our heart will not lie in our knee, nor our souls be breathed out in our requests ; but all conclude in a most full and blessed fruition. But because this, with the former, are touched before, I will say no more of them now ; so you have seen what we shall rest from.

Sect. XIX. The ninth and last jewel in our crown, and blessed attribute of this rest, is, that it is an eternal rest. This is the crown of our crown ; without which, all were comparatively little or nothing. The very thought of once leaving it, would else embitter all our joys : and the more would it pierce us, because of the singular excellencies which we must forsake. It would be a hell in heaven to think of once losing heaven : as it would be a kind of heaven to the damned, had they but hopes of once escaping.¹ Mortality is the disgrace of all sublunary delights. It makes our present life of little value (were it not for the reference it hath to God and eternity), to think that we must shortly lay it down. How can we take delight in any thing, when we remember how short that delight would be ; that the sweetness of our cups and morsels is dead as soon as they are but once past our taste ! Indeed, if man were as the beast, that knows not his suffering or death till he felt it, and little thinks when the knife is whetting, that it is making ready to cut his throat, then might we be merry till death forbid us, and enjoy our delights till they shall forsake us ; but, alas ! we know both good and evil ; and evil foreknown, is in part en-

¹ Transit hora, transit et pœna ; non accidunt sibi, sed cedunt potius et succedunt. Non sic gloria, non sic renumeratio ; non sic merces ipsa laboris ; nescit vicissitudinem, nescit finem ; manet toto simul, et manet in æternum. Sufficit nunc cuique diæ malitia sua ; nec laborum suum poterit reservare sequenti ; sed omnium merces laborum in una illa diæ reddetur, cui alter non succedit : guttatim pœna bibitur, aliquando sumitur ; per minutias transit ; sed in remuneratione torrens est voluptatis, et fluminis impetus ; torrens inundans lætitiæ, flumen gloriæ, et flumen pacis. Flumen plane est ; sed quod affluat ; non quod fluat vel effluat. Flumen vocatur, non quod transeat, vel pertranseat, sed quod abundet. Nobis non favum mellis ; purissimum vero et liquidissimum mel reposuit Deus ipsum, lætitiæ, gloriam, pacem, amœnitatem, felicitatem, jucunditatem et exultationem thesaurizavit nobis Deus noster ; hæc omnia unum ; ut sit participatio Hierusalem in idipsum ; et hoc unum et id ipsum non nisi Ipse ; erit enim Deus omnia et in omnibus. Hæc merces ; hæc corona nostra, hoc brævium nostrum ; ad quod utique curramus ut comprehendamus.—*Bern, Serm., 145. de temp.*

dured; and thus our knowledge increaseth our sorrows. (Eccles. i. 18.) How can it choose but spoil our pleasure, while we see it dying in our hands! How can I be as merry as the jovial world, who have mine eye fixed upon eternity! When methinks I foresee my dying hour, my friends waiting for my last gasp, and closing my eyes, while tears forbid to close their own; methinks I hear them say, He is dead. Methinks I see my coffin made, my grave in digging, and my friends there leaving me in the dust: and where, now, is that we took delight in? O but methinks I see, at the same view, that grave opening, and my dead, revived body rising; methinks I hear that blessed voice, 'Arise and live, and die no more.' Surely, were it not for eternity, I should think man a silly piece; and all this life and honour but contemptible: I shall call him, with David, a vain shadow; and with the prophet, nothing, and less than nothing, and altogether lighter than vanity itself. It utterly disgraceth the greatest glory in mine eyes, if you can but truly call it mortal. I can value nothing that shall have an end, except as it leads to that which hath no end; or as it comes from that love which hath neither beginning nor end. I speak this of my deliberate thoughts; and if some ignorant or forgetful soul have no such sad thoughts to disturb his pleasure, I confess he may be merrier for the present; but where is his mirth when he lieth a-dying? alas! it is a poor happiness that consists only in the ignorance or forgetfulness of approaching misery; but, O blessed eternity! where our lives are perplexed with no such thoughts, nor our joys interrupted with any such fears; where we shall be "pillars in God's temple," (Rev. iii. 12,) and go out no more. O, what do I say when I talk of eternity! Can my shallow thoughts conceive at all what the highest expression doth contain? To be eternally blessed, and so blessed! Why, surely this, if any thing, is the resemblance of God: eternity is a piece of infiniteness. Then, O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Days, and nights, and years, time, and end, and death, are words which there have no signification;^k nor are used, except perhaps to extol eternity, as the mention of hell, to extol heaven. No more use of our calendars or chronology: all the years of our Lord, and the years of our lives, are swallowed up and lost in this eternity. While we were servants, we

^k Habet æternitas suum simul, in quo sunt omnia quæ simul sunt loco vel tempore, et quæ sunt diversis in locis vel temporibus; ut Anselm referente Arriba.

held by lease ; and that but for the term of transitory life ; but the son abideth in the house for ever. (Gal. vi. 8.) Our first and earthly paradise in Eden had a way out, but none that ever we could find in again ; but this eternal paradise hath a way in (a milky way to us, but a bloody way to Christ), but no way out again ; “for they that would pass from hence to you,” saith Abraham, “cannot.” (Luke xvi. 24.) A strange phrase ! Would any pass from such a place if they might ? Could they endure to be absent from God again one hour ! No, but upon supposal that they would ; yet they could not. O then, my soul, let go thy dreams of present pleasures ; and loose thy hold of earth and flesh.¹ Fear not to enter that estate, where thou shalt ever after cease thy fears. Sit down, and sadly, once a day, bethink thyself of this eternity : among all the arithmetical numbers, study the value of this infinite cipher, which, though it stand for nothing in the vulgar account, doth yet contain all our millions, as much less than a simple unit. Lay by the perplexed and contradicting chronological tables, and fix thine eye on this eternity ; and the lines which remote thou couldst not follow, thou shalt see all together here concentrated. Study less those tedious volumes of history, which contain but the silent narration of dreams, and are but the pictures of the actions of shadows ; and, instead of all, study frequently, study thoroughly this one word, ‘eternity,’ and when thou hast learned thoroughly that one word, thou wilt never look on books again. What ! live, and never die ? Rejoice, and ever rejoice ! O, what sweet words are these, ‘never and ever !’ O, happy souls in hell, should you but escape after millions of ages ! and if the Origenist doctrine were but true ! O miserable saints in heaven, should you be dispossessed after the age of a million of worlds ! But, O this word, ‘everlasting,’ contains the accomplished perfection of their torment and our glory. O that the wicked sinner would but soundly study this word ‘everlasting,’ methinks it should startle him out of his dearest sleep ! O that the gracious soul would believingly study this word ‘everlasting,’ methinks it should revive him in the deepest agony ! And must I, Lord,

¹ De coexistentia rerum in Dei æternitate, lege Arribam plenissimo. Alvar. ‘de Aux.’ lib. ii. disp. 8. Balthaz. Navarrer. in i. part. ‘cont. 28. Cajet.’ et in i. p. q. 24. a. 3. Ferrar. ‘cont. Gent.’ lib. ii. c. 66, 67. Sic Nazar. &c. et e cont. vid. Twiss. ‘De Scientia Media,’ p. 81. et alibi passim. Barlo. ‘Exercit.’ 5. Durand, dist. lviii. q. 3. Bona, in i. sent. dist. 35 et 39, a. 2. q. 3.

thus live for ever? Then will I also love for ever. Must my joys be immortal; and shall not my thanks be also immortal? Surely, if I shall never loose my glory, I will also never cease thy praises. Shouldst thou but renew my lease of these first-fruits, would I not renew thy fine and rent? But if thou wilt both perfect and perpetuate me and my glory, as I shall be thine, and not mine own, so shall my glory be thy glory; and as all did take their spring from thee, so all shall devolve into thee again; and as thy glory was thine ultimate end in my glory, so shall it also be mine end, when thou hast crowned me with that glory which hath no end. And “to thee, O King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, shall be the honour and glory, for ever and ever: amen.” (2 Tim. i. 17.)

And thus I have endeavoured to show you a glimpse of the approaching glory: but, O, how short are my expressions of its excellency! Reader, if thou be an humble, sincere believer, and waitest with longing and labouring for this rest, thou wilt shortly see and feel the truth of all this; then wilt thou have so high an apprehension of this blessed state that will make thee pity the ignorance and distance of mortals; and will tell thee then all that is here said is spoken but in the dark, and falls short of the truth a thousand fold. In the mean time, let this much kindle thy desires, and quicken thine endeavours. Up, and be doing; run, and strive, and fight, and hold on, for thou hast a certain, glorious prize before thee. God will not mock thee: do not mock thyself, nor betray thy soul, by delaying or dallying, and all is thine own. What kind of men dost thou think Christians would be in their lives and duties, if they had still this glory fresh in their thoughts? What frame would their spirits be in, if their thoughts of heaven were lively and believing? Would their hearts be so heavy, and their countenance so sad? Or would they have need to take up their comforts from below? Would they be so loth to suffer, and afraid to die? or would they not think every day a year, till they did enjoy it? The Lord heal our carnal hearts, lest we enter not into his rest, because of our unbelief.

CHAP. VIII.

The People of God described.

SECT. I. Having thus performed my first task of describing and explicating the saint's rest, it remains that now I proceed

unto the second, and show you what these "people of God" are, and why so called, for whom this blessed rest remaineth; and I shall suit my speech unto the quality of the subject. While I was in the mount, I felt it was good being there, and therefore tarried there the longer; and were there not an extreme disproportion between my conceivings and that subject, yet much longer had I been. And could my capacity have contained what was there to be seen, I could have been contented to have built me a tabernacle there. Can a prospect of that happy land be tedious, or a discourse of eternity be too long, except it should detain us from actual possession, and our absence move us to impatience? But now I am descended from heaven to earth, from God to man, and must discourse of a worm not six feet long, whose life is but a span, and his years as a post that hasteth by; my discourse also shall be but a span, and in a brief touch I will pass it over. Having read of such a high and unspeakable glory, a stranger would wonder for what rare creature this mighty preparation should be, and expect some illustrious sun should now break forth; but, behold, only a shell full of dust, animated with an invisible rational soul, and that rectified with as unseen a restored power of grace; and this is the creature that must possess such glory. You would think it must needs be some deserving piece, or one that brings a valuable price. But, behold, one that hath nothing, and can deserve nothing, and confesseth this, yet cannot, of himself, confess it neither, yea, that deserveth the contrary misery, and would, if he might, proceed in that deserving; but being apprehended by love, he is brought to him that is all, and hath done and deserved all, and suffered for all that we deserved; and most affectionately receiving him, and resting on him, he doth, in and through him, receive all this. But let us see more particularly yet, what these "people of God" are.

They are a small part of lost mankind, whom God hath from eternity predestinated to this rest, for the glory of his mercy, and given to his Son, to be by him in a special manner redeemed, and fully recovered from their lost estate, and advanced to this higher glory: all which Christ doth, in due time, accomplish accordingly by himself for them, and by his Spirit upon them. To open all the parts of this half-description to the full, will take up more time and room than are allowed me. Therefore briefly thus:

1. I meddle only with mankind, not with angels; nor will I

curiously inquire whether there were any other world of men created and destroyed before this had being ; nor whether there shall be any other when this is ended. All this is quite above us, and so nothing to us : nor say I the sons of Adam only, because Adam himself is one of them.

2. And as it is no more excellent a creature than man that must have this possession, so is it that man, who once was lost, and had scarcely left himself so much as man. The heirs of this kingdom were taken, even from the tree of execution, and rescued by the strong hand of love from the power of the prince of darkness, who having taken them in his snares, did lead them captive at his will : they were once within a step of hell, who must now be advanced as high as heaven. And though I mention their lost condition before their predestination, yet I thereby intend not to signify any precedency it hath, either in itself, or in the divine consideration.^m That question I dare not touch, as being very suspicious that it is high arrogancy in us to dispute of precedency in the divine consideration ; and that we no more know what we talk of than this paper knows what I write of : when we confess, that all these acts in God are truly one, and that there is no difference of time with him : it is dangerous to dispute of priority or posterity in nature ; at least of the decree of the means, which is but one.

3. That they are but a small part of this lost generation, is too apparent in Scripture and experience. “It is the little flock to whom it is the Father’s good pleasure to give the kingdom.” If the sanctified are few, the saved must needs be few : fewer they are than the world imagines ; yet not so few as some drooping spirits deem, who are doubtful that God would cast off them, who would not reject them for all the world ; and are suspicious that God is unwilling to be their God ; when yet they know themselves willing to be his people.

4. It is the design of God’s eternal decree to glorify his mercy and grace to the highest in this their salvation ; and, therefore, needs must it be a great salvation. Every step of

^m *Intellectum animæ nostræ oculum noctuam esse considerans, in ignorantia sola quietem illius invenio : melius est enim tam fidei catholicæ quam philosophiæ, fateri cæcitatem nostram, quam asserere tanquam evidentia quæ non quietant intellectum ; evidentia namque quietativa est, inquit modeste Cajetan. in tom. 1. p. q. 22. Art. 4. Etsi Arriba hoc sapienter dictum sugillat, lib. 1. cap. 13.* And if so great a man as Cajetan be forced to this, after all his search and disputes upon these points, then inferior wits may well ease themselves in a like modest resolution.

mercy to it was great; how much more this end of all those mercies, which stands next to God's ultimate end, his glory! God cannot make any low or mean work to be the great business of an eternal purpose.

5. God hath given all things to his Son, but not as he hath given his chosen to him;ⁿ the difference is clearly expressed by the apostle. He hath made him "Head over all things to his church." (Ephes. i. 22.)^o And though Christ is, in some sense, a ransom for all, yet not in that special manner as for his people. He hath, according to the tenor of his covenant, procured salvation for all, if they will believe; but he hath procured for his chosen even this condition of believing.^p

6. Nor is the redeeming of them by death his whole task; but also the effecting of their full recovery: he may send his Spirit to persuade others; but he intends absolutely his prevailing only with his chosen. And as truly as he hath accomplished his part on the cross for them, so truly will he accomplish his part in heaven for them, and his part by his Spirit also on them. And of all that the Father hath thus given him, he will lose nothing.

But this is but a piece of their description, containing God's work for them, and on them; let us see what they are also in

ⁿ See John xvii. 2, a clear place. Sin ex præcedente prævaricatione naturali corruptioni mortales tenebantur obnoxii, gratiamque imaginis divinæ perdiderant; quid facto opus fuit ad hujusmodi recuperandam gratiam? Illius sane, illius hoc opus erat, qui ab initio, cum non esset, condidit omnia; divini scilicet verbi; ipsius enim intererat, corruptibile hoc ad incorruptionem revocare, ac pro omnibus rationabiliter patri satisfacere.—*Athanas. lib. 1. de Incarnat. Verbi.* Vide note^c p. 83 of this volume.

^o Christ taking to himself a body of the mass, and in all things like to ours, because we were obnoxious to the death of all corruptibleness, he delivered it to death for all, and offered it to God the Father.—*Athan. ubi supra.* Lege Paræi Irenic. cap. 24. p. 124. art. 5 and 6. For the Word, the Son of the Father being above all, might meritoriously alone recover all things, and suffer for all men, and was alone sufficient to appease the Father for all men.—*Athanasius ubi supra*; where he so often repeateth Christ's dying for all, and particularly to procure them a resurrection, as if he could not inculcate it sufficiently. Vide Clem. Alexand. Stromat. lib. 7. prope initi.

^p That faith is properly called the condition of the covenant, and justifieth as a condition, besides what I have said in my confession, I refer you to Master Wotton 'De Reconcil.' part 1. lib. 2. c. 19, where you have the attestation of our chief divines. And, indeed, he must be a wiser man than I that can reach to know, how faith can directly justify under any other notion than that of a condition; that apprehensive nature which makes men call it an instrument, being only its aptitude to its office, and not the formal reason of its justifying.

regard of the working of their own souls towards God, and their Redeemer, again.^a [These people of God then, are the (1) part of the (2) externally called, (3) who being by the (4) Spirit of Christ (5) thoroughly, though (6) imperfectly regenerate, are hereupon (7) convinced, and (8) sensible of that (9) evil in sin, (10) that misery in themselves, that (11) vanity in the creature, and that (12) necessity, (13) sufficiency, and (14) excellency of Jesus Christ, that they (15) abhor that evil, (16) bewail that misery, and (17) turn their hearts from that vanity, and (18) accepting of Christ for their (19) Saviour and (20) Lord, to bring them unto (21) God the chief good, and present them (22) perfectly just before him, do accordingly enter into a (23) cordial covenant with him, and so (24) deliver up themselves unto him, and herein (25) persevere to their lives' end.]

I shall briefly explain to you the branches of this part of the description also.

1. I say, they are a part of "the externally called," because the Scripture hath yet showed us no other way to the internal call, but by the external. "For how shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" All divulging of the substance of the Gospel, whether by solemn sermons, by writing, printing, reading, conference, or any other means that have a rational sufficiency, for information and conviction, are this preaching; though not alike clear and excellent. The knowledge of Christ^r is none of nature's principles:^s the book of the creatures is no means alone,

^a They that would see this work of God on the soul, handled most exactly, judiciously, scholastically, and briefly, let them read Mr. Parker's excellent 'Theses de Traductione peccatoris ad vitam.' If you cannot get the book, it is in the end of 'Ames. against Grevincho,' but maimed of fifteen Theses left out; though I own not every controverted assertion in it.

^r Ego dico, voluntate quidem non est homo justus; nec natura potest sed medicina poterit, quod vitio non potest.—*August. l. 1. de Nat. et Grat. c. 43.*

^s Quicquid illud est quod extrinsecus oculis et mentibus hominum objicitur, desitutum est illa via Spiritus quæ sola potest homines abducere a peccato, et ad vitæ spem efficaciter revocare.—*Amyrald. Defens. Calv. p. 154.* Quomodo causa illa supernaturalis intellectum liberet a nativis quibus occupatur tenebris, mens humana non comprehendit. Effectum summo Dei beneficio persentiscimus; rationem operationis non tenemus.—*Amyrald. Defens. Doct. Calv. p. 200.* Some confidently do, with Grotius, appeal to antiquity in the points of universal sufficient grace and free-will, concerning which, see Chamier, Bogerman's 'Annotations on Grot. Piet.' et Usher 'Eccles. Brit. Prim.,' what the ancient church thought and did against Pelagius. So Jo. Lacius 'De Pelag. Comment.,' Nic. Bodichir, in 'Socin. Romonst. Videliis,' &c. Yet, the truth is, most if not all the fathers of the first two or three hundred years, speak in a language seeming to lean strongly that way; and

much less a sufficient means to teach the knowledge of Christ. It may discover mercy, but gives not the least hint of the way of that mercy : it speaks nothing of God incarnate ; or two natures in one person ; of Jesus the son of Mary ; of Christ's suretyship, and suffering for us, rising, ascending, mediating, returning ; of two covenants, and their several conditions, and the reward of keeping them, and penalty of breaking them, &c. It is utterly silent in these things. And to affirm that the Spirit calls or teacheth men where the word is not, and where the creature or nature speaks not, is, I think, a groundless fiction. There is the light of the eye, and the light of the sun, or some other substitute external light necessary to our seeing any object. The Scripture and certain revelations from heaven, when and where such are, is the sun of external light : the understanding is our eye, or internal light ; this eye is become blind, and this internal light in the best is imperfect ; but the external light of Scripture is now perfected : therefore the work of the Spirit now is, not to perfect Scripture, or to add any thing to its discovery, or to be instead of a Scripture where it is wanting, much less where the Scripture is : but to remove the darkness from our understanding, that we may see clearly what the Scripture speaks clearly : before the Scripture was perfect, the Spirit did enlighten the prophets and penmen of Scripture both ways : but now I know no teaching of the Spirit, save only by its illuminating or sanctifying work ; teaching men no new lesson, nor the old without book ; but to read with understanding, what Scripture, nature, creatures, and providences, teach.^u The asserting

therefore Calvin and Scultetus in 'Medul. Pat.' charge them with no less than Pelagius's error : yet perhaps their laying the blame of evil actions on man's will, and persuading men's wills, may occasion men to charge them so far, as if therefore they supposed natural sufficiency ; or they speak of free-will as opposed to fate, nature, and coercion, as you may find very many of them favourably interpreted by Chamier. Panst. tom. 3. lib. 3. c. 16.

^u As when Christ had opened the eyes of the man born blind, he did but give him a power to see what present objects the sun or other external lights should reveal, but not the actual sight of all the objects in the world, nor of any without external light ; he must yet travel to Rome, to India, &c. if he will see them ; so God's illumination by the Spirit, doth give men ability to see, but not without external revelation by the word ; and they must travel by long, painful study, from truth to truth, before they know them. See Heb. v. 11—14, fully for this. Lutherus de Cicerone, si sermonibus convivalibus creditur, 120. dicit, Cicero vir sapiens et sedulus multa fecit, et passus est. Spero Deum ipsi et similibus ipsi propitium futurum. Dicant nobis Lutherus et Zuinglius hoc sperant peccare gravius ; imo viderint ne dum culicem colant, elephantem devorent.—*Pareus, Irenic.* 28. p. (mibi) 245, 246.

of any more, is proper to the enthusiasts. If the Spirit's teaching did without Scripture or tradition reveal Christ, surely some of those millions of poor blind pagans would have before this believed, and the christian faith have been propagated among them.

2. That these people of God are but a part of those that are thus externally called, is too evident in Scripture and experience. "Many are called, but few chosen:" but the internally, effectually called, are all chosen: "for whom he called, them he justified; and whom he justified, them he glorified." (Rom. viii. 30.) The bare invitation of the Gospel, and men's hearing the word, is so far from giving title to, or being an evidence of Christianity and its privileges, that where it prevails not to a thorough conversion, it sinks deeper, and casts under a double damnation.

3. The first differencing work I affirm to be regeneration by the Spirit of Christ;^u taking it for granted, that this regeneration is the same with effectual vocation, with conversion, with sanctification; understanding conversion, and sanctification, of the first infusion of the principle of spiritual life into the soul, and not for the addition of degrees, or the sanctifying of the conversation, in which last sense it is most frequently taken in Scripture.

^u See Mr. Rich. Hooker, in his 'Discourse of Justification,' and Pet. Martyr on Rom. c. 3. p. 157, sheweth fully how the Spirit goeth before faith, and yet, in the increase, followeth after it. *Fides est pars sanctitatis; nostra ergo fides fluit ex electione. Neque necesse est ut fides et sanctitas sit idem: sufficit si modo fides sit pars sanctitatis nostræ; et quis dubitat sanctificari nos fide perinde atque ulla alia qualitate sancta? Ut Jud. 3.; Acts. xv. 9. Itaque non tantum conjuncta est fides cum sanctitate in uno et eodem subiecto; sed fides est formaliter sanctitas nostra; non quidem integralis, sed partialis; quemadmodum etiam spes et charitas.—Dr. Twiss. cont. Corvin. p. 222. Cum Dominus per Ezek. dicit, "Cor lapideum auferam et dabo," &c., utique per gratiæ suæ illuminationem mutat hominis voluntatem. Hæc est mutatio non humani arbitrii, sed dextræ excelsi: per quam filii hominum graves corde, qui diligunt vanitatem, et quærent mendacium, ad diligendam et quærendam veritatem, non ipsi bonam voluntatem asserunt, sed à Domino donum bonæ voluntatis recipiunt.—Fulgent. de Verit. Præd. cap. 16. Sicut in nativitate carnali omnem nascentis hominis voluntatem præcedit operis divini formatio: sic in spirituali nativitate qua veterem hominem deponere incipimus, ut novum, qui in justitia et sanctitate veritatis creatus est, induamus: nemo potest habere bonam voluntatem motu proprio, nisi mens ipsa, i. e. interior homo noster renovetur ac reformetur ex Deo.—Fulgent. de Incarn. c. 19. Fulgentius saith, ubi sup. c. 23, 1 Cor. xii. 8, 9, "Alteri fides in eodem spiritu." Non ergo spiritum sanctum quia credimus, sed ut crederemus accepimus.*

This spiritual regeneration^x then, is the first and great qualification of these people of God; which, though habits are more for their acts than themselves, and are only perceived in their acts, yet by its causes and effects we should chiefly inquire after. 'To be the people of God without regeneration,^y is as impossible as to be the natural children of men without generation; seeing we are born God's enemies, we must be new-born his sons, or else remain his enemies still. O that the unregenerate world did know or believe this! in whose ears the new birth sounds as a paradox, and the great change which God works upon the soul, is a strange thing: who, because they never felt any such supernatural work upon themselves, do therefore believe that there is no such thing, but that it is the conceit and fantasy of idle brains; who make the terms of regeneration, sanctification, holiness, and conversion, a matter of common reproach and scorn, though they are the words of the Spirit of God himself; and Christ hath spoken it with his mouth, "that except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." The greatest reformation of life that can be attained to, without this new life wrought in the soul, may procure their further delusion, but never their salvation.^z

This regeneration I call thorough, to distinguish it from those slight tinctures, and superficial changes, which other men may partake of; and yet "imperfect," to distinguish our present from our future condition in glory; and that the Christian may know, that it is sincerity, not perfection, which he must inquire after in his soul.

Sect. III. Thus far the soul is passive. Let us next see by what acts this new life doth discover itself, and this divine spark doth break forth; and how the soul, touched with this loadstone of the Spirit, doth presently move toward God. The first work I call "conviction," which comprehends knowledge, and assent.

^x De necessitate regenerationis, et Christi adventu ad eam procurandam, lege Athan. 'de Incarn. Verbi.'

^y Sananda est itaque (Juliane) humana, Deo miserante, natura; non te inaniter declamante, tanquam sana laudanda.—*August. Operis Imperf.* lib. 2. n. 8. John iii. 3.

^z I mean that this is not a sufficient way to their salvation, but yet it may conduce to the good of others, to restrain their vicious actions, and somewhat more.—*Danæus cont. Bellar. ad Tom. Cont.* 4. p. 231. Mea sententia hæc est ut Christianus judicetur legitimus, quisquis fuerit in ecclesia lege et jure fidei divinam gratiam consecutus.—*Cyprian. Epist.* 76. *ad Magnum.* Aliter pectus credentis abluitur, aliter mens hominis per fidei merita mandatur; ut Cyprian. *Epist.* 76. *ad Magnum.*

It comprehends the knowledge of what the Scripture speaks against sin and sinners; and that this Scripture which so speaks, is the word of God himself. Whosoever knows not both these, is not yet thus convinced. It comprehends a sincere assent to the verity of the Scripture; as also some knowledge of ourselves, and our own guilt, and an acknowledgment of the verity of those consequences, which, from the premises of sin in us, and threats in Scripture, do conclude us miserable. It hath been a great question, and disputed in whole volumes, which grace is the first in the soul; where faith and repentance are usually the only competitors. In regard of the principle, the power, or habit, which soever it be that is infused, they are all at once; being indeed all one; and called several graces from the diversity of their objects and subjects, as residing in the several faculties of the soul; the life and rectitude of which several faculties and affections, are in the same sense several graces; as the German, French, British seas are several seas. And for the acts, it is most apparent, that neither repentance, nor faith, in the ordinary strict sense, is first, but knowledge.^a There is no act of the rational soul about any object preceding knowledge. Their evasion is too gross, who tell us, that knowledge is no grace, or but a common act; when a dead soul is by the Spirit enlivened, its first act is to know; and why should it not exert a sincere act of knowing, as well as believing, and the sincerity of knowledge be requisite as well as of faith; especially when faith in the Gospel-sense, is sometimes taken largely, containing many acts, whereof knowledge is one; in which large sense, indeed, faith is the first grace. This conviction implieth also the subduing and silencing, in some measure, of all their carnal reasonings, which were wont to prevail against the truth, and a discovery of the fallacies of all their former argumentations.

2. As there must be conviction, so also sensibility: God works on the heart, as well as the head; both were corrupted, and out of order. The principal of new life doth quicken both. All true spiritual knowledge doth pass into affections. That religion which is merely traditional, doth indeed swim loose in the brain; and the devotion which is kindled but by men and

^a *Ista gratia quam Deus vasis misericordiae gratis donat, ab illuminatione cordis incipit: et hominis voluntatem non bonam invenit ipsa; sed facit atque ut eligatur, ipsa prius eligit: neque suscipitur, aut illigitur, nisi hoc ipsa in corde hominis operetur. Ergo ut susceptio et desiderium gratiae, opus est ipsius gratiae.*—*Fulgent. de Verit. Præd.* c. 15.

means, is hot in the mouth, and cold in the stomach. The work that had no higher rise than education, example, custom, reading, or hearing, doth never kindly pass down to the affections. The understanding which did receive but mere notions, cannot deliver them to the affections, as realities. The bare help of doctrine upon an unrenewed soul, produceth in the understanding but a superficial apprehension, and half assent, and therefore can produce in the heart but small sensibility. As hypocrites may know many things, yea, as many as the best Christian, but nothing with the clear apprehensions of an experienced man; so may they with as many things be slightly affected, but they give deep rooting to none. To read and hear of the worth of meat and drink, may raise some esteem of them, but not such as the hungry and thirsty feel; for by feeling they know the worth thereof. To view in the map of the Gospel, the precious things of Christ and his kingdom, may slightly affect; but to thirst for, and drink of, the living waters; and to travel, to live in, to be heir of that kingdom, must needs work another kind of sensibility.^b It is Christ's own differencing mark, and I had rather have one from him than from any, that the good ground gives the good seed deep rooting; but some others entertain it but into the surface of the soil, and cannot afford it depth of earth. The great things of sin, of grace, and Christ, and eternity, which are of weight, one would think to move a rock, yet shake not the heart of the carnal professor, nor pierce his soul unto the quick; though he should have them all ready in his brain, and be a constant preacher of them to others, yet do they little affect himself: when he is pressing them upon the hearts of others most earnestly, and crying out on the senselessness of his dull hearers, you would little think how insensible is his own soul, and the great difference between his tongue and his heart. His study and invention procure him zealous and

^b Deus autem ne fideles obliviscantur illius mortis in qua hæserunt, facit perpetuo ut odor ipsius tam fœtidus, et tam insuavis, feriat ipsorum nares. Nam manent reliquæ illius mortis perpetuo dum hic vivimus: ut ex his æstiment quanta in morte jacuerint antequam cœperunt vivificari cum Christo, et recentem ipsius retineant memoriam.—*Rolloc. in Col. 2. 12. p. (mihi) 141.* Neque profecto qui extra Christum est, serio sentit se mortuum esse priusquam incipiat esse in Christo, et degustare illam quæ ex ipso solo fluit vitam tam suavem et jucundam, postquam semel degustarunt homines, non tantum sentire incipiunt mortem illam in qua jacuerunt, sed etiam ab ea totis animis abhorrent; neque ulla conditione vitam illam quam sentire incipiunt cum ea commutarint.—*Rolloc. ibid. p. 142.*

moving expressions, but they cannot procure him answerable affections. It is true, some soft and passionate natures may have tears at command, when one that is truly gracious hath none; yet is this Christian, with dry eyes, more solidly apprehensive and deeply affected, than the other is in the midst of his tears; and the weeping hypocrite will be drawn to his sin again with a trifle, which the groaning Christian would not be hired to commit with crowns and kingdoms.

The things that the soul is convinced and sensible of, are especially these in the description mentioned.

1. The evil of sin. The sinner is made to know and feel that the sin which was his delight, his sport, the support of his credit and estate, is indeed a more loathsome thing than toads or serpents, and a greater evil than plague or famine, or any other calamities;^c it being a breach of the righteous law of the Most High God, dishonourable to him, and destructive to the sinner. Now the sinner reads and hears no more the reproofs of sin, as words of course, as if the minister wanted something to say to fill up his sermon; but when you mention his sin, and stir in his wounds, he feels you speak at his very heart, and yet is contented you should show him the worst, and set it home, though he bear the smart. He was wont to marvel what made men keep such a stir against sin; what harm it was for a man to take a little forbidden pleasure: he saw no such heinousness in it, that Christ must needs die for it, and most of the world be eternally tormented in hell. He thought this was somewhat hard measure, and greater punishment than could possibly be deserved by a little fleshly liberty, or worldly delight, neglect of Christ, his word, or worship; yea, by a wanton thought, a vain word, a dull duty, or cold affection. But now the case is altered: God hath opened his eyes to see that inexpressible villainess in sin, which satisfies him of the reason of all this.

2. The soul in this great work is convinced and sensible, as of the evil of sin, so of its own misery by reason of sin. They who before read the threats of God's law, as men do the whole

^c Nulla offensa Dei est venialis de se, nisi tantummodo per respectum ad divinam misericordiam, quæ non vult de facto quamlibet offensam imputare ad mortem, cum illud possit justissime. Et ita concluditur quod peccatum mortale et veniale, in esse tali non distinguuntur intrinsece et essentialiter, sed solum per respectum ad divinam gratiam, &c.—*Gerson. de Vita Spirit. Corol.*

1. Some Papists, then, confess the damning merit of every sin.

stories of foreign wars, or as they behold the wounds and the blood in a picture, or piece of arras, which never makes them smart or fear: now they find it is their own story, and they perceive they read their own doom, as if they found their names written in the curse, or heard the law say, as Nathan, "Thou art the man." The wrath of God seemed to him but as a storm to a man in a dry house, or as the pains of the sick to the healthful stander-by, or as the torments of hell to a child that sees the story of Dives and Lazarus upon the wall; but now he finds the disease is his own, and feels the pain in his own bowels, and the smart of the wounds in his own soul. In a word, he finds himself a condemned man, and that he is dead and damned in point of law, and that nothing was wanting but mere execution to make him most absolutely and irrecoverably miserable.^d Whether you will call this a work of the law or Gospel, as in several senses it is of both; the law expressing, and the Gospel intimating and implying, our former condemnation; sure I am, it is a work of the Spirit wrought, in some measure, in all the regenerate: and though some do judge it unnecessary bondage, yet it is beyond my conceiving how he should come to Christ for pardon who first found not himself guilty and condemned, or for life who never found himself dead. "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." Yet I deny not, but the discovery of the remedy as soon as the misery, must needs prevent a great part of the trouble, and make the distinct effect on the soul, to be with much more difficulty discerned. Nay, the actings of the soul are so quick, and oft so confused, that the distinct order of these workings may not be apprehended or remembered at all; and perhaps the joyful apprehensions of mercy may make the sense of misery the sooner forgotten.

3. So doth the Spirit also convince the soul of the creature's vanity and insufficiency.^e Every man naturally is a flat idolater;

^d Quisquis desolationem non novit, nec consolationem agnoscere potest. Et quisquis consolationem ignorat esse necessariam, superest ut non habeat gratiam Dei. Inde est quod homines seculi negotiis et flagitiis implicati, dum miseriam non sentiunt, non attendunt misericordiam.—*Bern. Serm. 31. de Temp.* Humiliation, though it do not properly cleanse your hands, yet it plucks off the gloves, and makes them bare for washing.—*Mr. Vine's Serm. on Jam. iv. 8. p. 12.*

^e Fecit Deus hominem ad se, fecit illum sui capacem, et regno suo æterno destinavit: cumque ipse sit immortalis, infinitus, æternus, quies, &c., efficit,

our hearts turned from God in our first fall, and ever since the creature hath been our god. This is the grand sin of nature. When we set up to ourselves a wrong end, we must needs err in all the means. The creature is to every unregenerate man his God and his Christ. He ascribeth to it the divine prerogatives, and alloweth it the highest room in his soul: or if ever he come to be convinced of misery, he fleeth to it as his saviour and supply. Indeed, God and his Christ hath usually the name, and shall be still called both Lord and Saviour; but the real expectation is from the creature, and the work of God is laid upon it. How well it will perform that work the sinner must know hereafter. It is his pleasure, his profit, and his honour, that is the natural man's trinity, and his carnal self that is these in unity. Indeed, it is that flesh that is the principal idol: the other three are deified in their relation to ourselves. It was our first sin to aspire to be as gods; and it is the greatest sin that runs in our blood, and is propagated in our nature from generation to generation. When God should guide us, we guide ourselves; when he should be our sovereign, we rule ourselves.¹ The laws which he gives us, we would correct and find fault with; and if we had had the making of them, we would have made them otherwise. When he should take care of us,

nos etiam capaces et appetentes immortalitatis, infinitatis, quietis, &c. Sed in se ac non in nobis; ut se nobis finem dedit, non nos ipsos; sed homo excinit, &c., non tamen ab illa capacitate et desiderio, hæc enim est ejus natura et essentia. Sed (res stupenda) illa omnia indesinentur appetit, quæritve; sed in seipso non in Deo adversus quem non minus perfidus quam miser; et ideo miser quia perfidus rebellavit. Et hæc est origo vitiorum, &c., quia conditus est capax et appetens celsitudinis, sed in Deo; etsi à Deo separatus pergit appetere celsitudinem; sed in se; et hæc est superbia; quia honoris est cupidus; sed in Deo pergit honorem sectari, sed sibi et in se; et hæc ambitio, &c. Lege ult. Gibieuf. de lib. 1. c. 21. sect. 6. p. 136.

¹ Etsi qui primum peccat per recessum à Deo peccat, quia tamen peccando sibi ipse se affixit, quando deinceps peccat non jam per nudum recessum à Deo peccat, sed per adhæSIONem ad seipsum; quæ est illi quasi secunda quædam sed adulterina inclinatio, substituta in loco germanæ illius, et sinceræ quam Creator omnipotens inseruerat, eamque paulatim debilitans et obscurans. Dixi non per nudum recessum à Deo, quia illa ipsa adhæSio inordinata ad seipsum, constat recessu à Deo, tanquam esse formali, et maligno spiritu depravationis et inordinationis suæ.—*Gib.* lib. 2. de *Libert.* c. 19. sect. 22. p. 422. Hic est status hominis lapsi; quem amorem proprium communiter non culpamus; de quo affirmare licet nihil aliud esse nisi illum morem quem initio creaturæ Deus nobis inseruit; sed à Deo avulsum, et ad nos ipsos derivatum et detortum.—*Gibieuf.* lib. 1. c. 21. sect. 7. p. 36.

and must, or we perish, we will care for ourselves : when we should depend on him in daily receivings, we had rather keep our stock ourselves, and have our portion in our own hands : when we should stand at his disposal, we would be at our own ; and when we should submit to his providence, we usually quarrel at it ; as if we knew better what is good or fit for us than he ; or how to dispose of all things more wisely : if we had the disposal of the events of wars, and the ordering of the affairs of churches and states, or the choice of our own outward condition, it would be far otherwise than now it is ; and we think we could make a better disposal, order, and choice, than God hath made. This is the language of a carnal heart, though it doth not always speak out. When we should study God, we study ourselves ; when we should mind God, we mind ourselves ; when we should love God, we love our carnal selves ; when we should trust God, we trust ourselves ; when we should honour God, we honour ourselves ; and when we should ascribe to God, and admire him, we ascribe to and admire ourselves : and, instead of God, we would have all men's eyes and dependance on us, and all men's thanks returned to us, and would gladly be the only men on earth extolled and admired by all. And thus we are naturally our own idols : but down falls this Dagon, when God doth once renew the soul. It is the great business of that great work, to bring the heart back to God himself. He convinceth the sinner : 1. That the creature, of himself, can neither be his god, to make him happy ; 2. Nor yet his Christ, to recover him from his misery, and restore him to God, who is his happiness. This God doth, not only by preaching, but by providence also ; because words seem but wind, and will hardly take off the raging senses, therefore doth God make his rod to speak, and continue speaking, till the sinner hear, and hath learned by it this great lesson. This is the great reason why affliction doth so ordinarily concur in the work of conversion ; these real arguments, which speak to the quick, will force a hearing, when the most convincing and powerful words are slighted. When a sinner made his credit his god, and God shall cast him into lowest disgrace ; or bring him that idolized his riches into a condition wherein they cannot help him, or cause them to take wing and fly away ; or the rust to corrupt, and the thief to steal his adored god in a night, or an hour ; what a help is here to this work of conviction ! When

a man that made his pleasure his god, whether ease,^m or sports, or mirth, or company, or gluttony, or drunkenness, or clothing, or buildings; or whatsoever a ranging eye, a curious ear, a raging appetite, or a lustful heart, could desire, and God shall take these from him, or give him their sting and curse with them, and turn them all into gall and wormwood; what a help is here to this conviction! When God shall cast a man into a languishing sickness, and inflict wounds and anguish on his heart, and stir up against him his own conscience, and then, as it were, take the sinner by the hand, and lead him to credit, to riches, to pleasure, to company, to sports, or whatsoever was dearest to him, and say, ‘Now, try if these can help you; can these heal thy wounded conscience? Can they now support thy tottering cottage? Can they keep thy departing soul in thy body, or save thee from mine everlasting wrath? Will they prove to thee eternal pleasures, or redeem thy soul from the eternal flames? Cry aloud to them, and see now whether these will be instead of God and his Christ unto thee.’ O, how this works now with the sinner; when sense itself acknowledgeth the truth, and even the flesh is convinced of the creature’s vanity, and our very deceiver is undeceived! Now he despiseth his former idols, and calleth them all but silly comforters, wooden, earthly, dirty gods, of a few days old, and quickly perishing; he speaketh as contemptuously of them as Baruk of the pagan idols, or our martyrs of the papists’ god of bread, which was yesterday in the oven, and is to-morrow on the dunghill; he chideth himself for his former folly, and pitieth those that have no higher happiness. O poor Croesus, Cæsar, Alexander, thinks he, how small, how short, was your happiness! Ah, poor

^m *Finis operantis malum est bonum. Bonum est principium et finis mali eo modo quo malum utroque gaudere potest; estque axioma receptissimum; nemo intendens in malum operatur, et proinde ille etiam qui facit malum, intendit bonum.—Observat. Dionysius.* Aliud esse quod fit, aliud quod appetitur. Appetitur bonum, fit malum; dum scilicet bonum inordinate appetitur, dum appetitur bonum inferius eo, cui destinati sumus, et quod appetere tenemur.—*Gibieuf. lib. 2. de Libert. c. 20. sect. 2. p. 424.* Sed quæstio est, utrum prius sit in peccato, vel aversio à Deo, vel conversio ad creaturam.—*Resp.* Aversionem præcedere, conversionem autem indebitam sequi: nec ullum esse peccatum nisi præcesserit aversio à Deo; conversio namque ad creaturam, non est indebita et inordinata, nisi prout importat inihæsiōnem absolutam ad creaturam, et derelictionem Dei: atque adeo nisi subest aversioni à Deo tanquam formæ.—*Gib. lib. 2. c. 20. sect. 5. p. 425.* This aversion from God is from him both as the first and last, the principium et finis, the first Ruler, and the chief Good; as *Gib. ubi sup. sect. 8.*

wretches ! Base honours ; woful pleasures ; sad mirth ; ignorant learning ; defiled dunghill ; counterfeit righteousness ! Poor stuff to make a god of : simple things to save souls ! Wo to them that have no better a portion, no surer saviours, nor greater comforts, than these can yield, in their last and great distress and need ! In their own place they are sweet and lovely ; but in the place of God, how contemptible and abominable ! They that are accounted excellent and admirable within the bounds of their own calling, should they step into the throne, and usurp sovereignty, would soon, in the eyes of all, be vile and insufferable.

4. The fourth thing that the soul is convinced and sensible of, is, the absolute necessity, the full sufficiency, and perfect excellency, of Jesus Christ. It is a great question, whether all the forementioned works are not common, and only preparations unto this ? They are preparatives, and yet not common ; every lesser work is a preparative to the greater ; and all the first works of grace, to those that follow : so faith is a preparative to our continual living in Christ, to our justification and glory. There are, indeed, common convictions, and so there is also a common believing ; but this, as in the former terms explained, is both a sanctifying and saving work : I mean a saving act of a sanctifying soul, excited by the Spirit's special grace. That it precedes justification, contradicts not this ; for so doth faith itself too : nor that it precedes faith, is any thing against it ; for I have showed before, that it is a part of faith in the large sense : and in the strict sense taken, faith is not the first gracious act, much less that act of fiducial recumbency, which is commonly taken for the justifying act ; though, indeed, it is no one single act, but many, that are the condition of justification.ⁿ

This conviction is not by mere argumentation, as a man is convinced of the verity of some inconcerning consequence by dispute ; but also by the sense of our desperate misery, as a man in famine, of the necessity of food ; or a man that had read or

ⁿ Chamier saith, "*Fidem esse causam justificationis nego : tunc enim justificatio non esset gratuita, sed ex nobis ; at est fides mea gratuita, neque ullam habet causam præter Dei misericordiam. Itaque dicitur fides justificare, non quia efficiat justificationem ; sed quia efficitur in justificato, et requiritur in justificato, adeo ut nemo qui fruatur usu rationis, justificatus sit nisi, qui habeat hanc fidem ; neque ullus habeat hanc fidem qui non sit justificatus.*—*Chamier, tom. iii. lib. 13. c. 6.* And if it be no cause, it is certainly no proper instrument. It is, saith Cham. "*tantum ratio, seu modus agendi,*" c. 6. sect. 6, 7.

heard his sentence of condemnation, is convinced of the absolute necessity of pardon; or as a man that lies in prison for debt, is convinced of the necessity of a surety to discharge it.^o Now the sinner finds himself in another case than ever he was aware of; he feels an insupportable burden upon him, and sees there is none but Christ can take it off. He perceives that he is under the wrath of God, and that the laws proclaim him a rebel and an outlaw, and none but Christ alone can make his peace: he is a man pursued by a lion, that must perish, if he find not present sanctuary. He feels the curse doth lie upon him, and upon all he hath for his sake, and Christ alone can make him blessed: he is now brought to this dilemma, either he must have Christ to justify him, or be eternally condemned; ^p he must have Christ to save him, or burn in hell for ever; he must have Christ to bring him again to God, or be shut out of his presence everlastingly; and now no wonder if he cry as the martyr, Lambert, "None but Christ, none but Christ!" It is not gold, but bread, that will satisfy the hungry; nor any thing but pardon that will comfort the condemned. "All things are now but dross and dung;" (Phil. iii. 7—9;) and what we counted gain, is now but loss in comparison of Christ: for, as the sinner seeth his utter misery, and the disability of himself, and all things to relieve him, so he doth perceive that there is no saving mercy out of Christ: the truth of the threatening, and tenor of both covenants, do put him out of all such hopes. There is none found in heaven or earth that can open the sealed book, save the Lamb: without his blood, there is no remission; and without remission, there is no salvation. (Rev. v. 3—6; Heb. ix. 22, and xiii. 12.) Could the sinner now make any shift without Christ, or could any thing else supply his wants and save

^o That this was not per solutionem stricte sumptam, sed per satisfactionem, viz. non per solutionem ejusdem (neque insensu morali vel legali) sed tantidem, vide Doctis. Parkerum 'de Descendū Christi,' p. 108; et Rivetum 'in Disputat. de Satisfac.,' et Ball. 'de Fœdere,' et Cameronem sæpius, ut Oper. Fol. p. 363, &c. But fully on this question, though in a contracted style, is Grotius 'de Satisfactione.'

^p Etsi in negotio justificationis magno periculo erratur, prout ea de re controversia procedit inter nos et pontificios, utrum, viz. gratia Dei justificatio vobis contingat, an meritis nostris. Mark, the question is not of the conditionality of obedience to Christ, but of merit. Attamen prout inter nos et piscatorem controversia instituitur, passivæ tantum an etiam activæ Christi obedientia justificemur coram Deo, nullo prorsus erratur periculo. Utrobique enim justificationis causæ Dei gratiæ et Christi meritis ascribuntur, non autem operibus nostris.—*Doct. Twiss, contra Corvinum*, p. 3.

his soul, then might Christ be disregarded ; but now he is convinced that there is no other name, and the necessity is absolute. (Acts iv. 12.)

2. And as the soul is thus convinced of the necessity of Christ, so also of his full sufficiency. He sees, though the creature cannot, and himself cannot, yet Christ can. Though the fig-leaves of our own unrighteous righteousness are too short to cover our nakedness, yet the righteousness of Christ is large enough : ours is disproportionable to the justice of the law, but Christ's doth extend to every tittle. If he intercede, there is no denial ; such is the dignity of his person, and the value of his merits, that the Father granteth all he desireth : he tells us himself, "that the Father heareth him always." (John xi. 14.) His sufferings being a perfect satisfaction to the law, and all power in heaven and earth being given to him, he is now able to supply every of our wants, and to save to the uttermost all that come to him. (Heb. vii. 25.)

Quest. How can I know his death is sufficient for me, if not for all ; and how is it sufficient for all, if not suffered for all ?

Answ. Because I will not interrupt my present discourse with controversy, I will say something to this question by itself in another tract, if God enable me.^a

3. The soul is also convinced of the perfect excellency of Jesus Christ, both as he is considered in himself, and as considered in relation to us ; both as he is the only way to the Father, and as he is the End, being one with the Father. Before, he knew Christ's excellency as a blind man knows the light of the sun ; but now, as one that beholdeth his glory.

And thus doth the Spirit convince the soul.

Sect. IV. 3. After this sensible conviction the will discovereth also its change, and that in regard of all the four forementioned objects.

1. The sin which the understanding pronounceth evil, the will doth accordingly turn from with abhorrency. Not that the sensitive appetite is changed, or any way made to abhor its object ; but when it would prevail against the conclusions of reason, and carry us to sin against God, when Scripture should be the rule, and reason the master, and sense the servant : this disorder and evil the will abhorreth.

2. The misery also which sin hath procured, as he discerneth,

^a See Davenant's 'Dissertation,' and Dailæus's 'Apology,' and Amiralduſ against Spanhemius.

so he bewaileth. It is impossible that the soul now living, should look either on its trespass against God, or yet on its own self-procured calamity, without some compunction and contrition. He that truly discerneth that he hath killed Christ, and killed himself, will surely, in some measure, be pricked to the heart. If he cannot weep, he can heartily groan ; and his heart feels what his understanding sees.

3. The creature he now renounceth as vain, and turneth it out of his heart with disdain. Not that he undervalueth it, or disclaimeth its use ; but its idolatrous abuse, and its unjust usurpation.

There is a twofold sin :^r one against God himself, as well as his laws, when he is cast out of the heart, and something else doth take his place. This is that I intend in this place. The other is when a man doth take the Lord for his God, but yet swerveth in some things from his commands : of this before. It is a vain distinction that some make, that the soul must be turned first from sin : secondly, from the creature to God : for the sin that is thus set up against God, is the choice of something below in his stead ;^s and no creature in itself is evil, but the abuse of it is the sin ; therefore, to turn from the creature, is only to turn from that sinful abuse.

Yet hath the creature a twofold consideration : first, as it is vain and insufficient to perform what the idolater expecteth, and so I handle it here ; secondly,^t as it is the object of such sinful abuse, and the occasion of sin ; and so it falls under the former branch of our turning from sin, and in this sense their division may be granted. But this is only a various respect ; for, indeed, it is still only our sinful abuse of the creature, in our vain admirations, undue estimations, too strong affections, and false expectations, which we turn from.

^r This sin directly against God himself, as it is^u in the understanding and speech, is called blasphemy : but as it is in the judgment, will, affections, and action altogether, it is called idolatry, or atheism. Great Athanasius approves of this distinction of sin, in his judicious ‘Discourse of the Sin against the Holy Ghost.’ He saith, between sin in the general, and blasphemy, this is the difference—“He that sinneth, transgresseth the law; he that blasphemeth, committeth impiety against the Godhead itself.”

^s Ut enim debitus amor nostri non est, nisi prout includit ordinem ad Deum; ita amor nostri inordinatus nequit intelligi, nisi prout importat recessum à Deo.—*Gibieuf. lib. 2, de Libertat. Dei, cap. xix. sect. 32, p. 422.*

^t Peccare est subjici creaturæ contra ordinem Dei, ut Gibieuf. lib. ‘De Libertat. Creat.’ p. 4. Et qui peccat semper appetit bonum particulare; ut idem Gibieuf. et Bradwardin., et Aquin., et Twiss., et plerique scholastici.

There is a twofold error very common in the description of the work of conversion : the one, of those who only mention the sinner's turning from sin to God, without mentioning any receiving of Christ by faith ; the other, of those who, on the contrary, only mention a sinner's believing, and then think they have said all : nay, they blame them as legalists, who make any thing but the bare believing of the love of God in Christ to us, to be part of the work, and would persuade poor souls to question all their former comforts, and conclude the work to have been only legal and unsound, because they have made their changes of heart, and turning from sin and creatures, part of it, and have taken up part of their comfort from the reviewing of these as evidences of right work. Indeed, should they take up here without ^u Christ, or take such a change instead of Christ, in whole or in part, the reprehension were just, and the danger great ; but can Christ be the way where the creature is the end ? Is he not the only way to the Father ; and must not a right end be intended before right means ? Can we seek to Christ to reconcile us to God, while in our hearts we prefer the creature before him ; or doth God dispossess the creature, and sincerely turn the heart therefrom, when he will not bring the soul to Christ ? Is it a work that is ever wrought in an unrenewed soul ? You will say, " that without faith it is impossible to please God." ^x True ; but what faith doth the apostle there speak of ? " He that cometh to God, must believe that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." The belief of the Godhead must needs precede the belief of the mediatorship ; and the taking of the Lord for our God, must, in order, precede the taking of Christ for our Saviour, though our peace with God do follow this : therefore, Paul, when he was to deal with the Athenian idolaters, teacheth them the knowledge of the Godhead first, and the Mediator afterwards. But, you will say, ' May not an unregenerate man believe that there is a God ? ' True, and

^u Peruse Master Pemble of this ' *Vindic. Gratiae*, ' p. 135, where he shows you what darkness and confusion is in the writings of many learned men, by their restraining conversion to the bare act of believing, not so much as mentioning any other grace. And that to repent, to love God, and our neighbour, to abstain from evil, to practise duties, are as proper parts of true conversion, as faith ; and that the Scripture gives no ground for any such restraint, but joins repentance and other godly acts with faith.

^x Heb. xi. 16. Besides, though the person please not God, nor his actions, so as for God to justify them, or to take delight in them as gracious ; yet some actions of wicked men, tending to reformation, may please God in some respect, secundum quid ; as Ahab's humiliation :

so may he also believe that there is a Christ; but he cannot more cordially accept of the Lord for his God than he can accept of Christ for his Saviour. In the soul of every unregenerate man, the creature possesseth both places, and is both God and Christ.^y Can Christ be believed in, where our own righteousness or any other thing is trusted as our Saviour; or doth God ever thoroughly discover sin and misery, and clearly take the heart from all creatures, and self-righteousness, and yet leave the soul unrenewed? The truth is, where the work is sincere, there it is entire; and all these parts are truly wrought: and as turning from the creature to God, and not by Christ, is no true turning; so believing in Christ, while the creature hath our hearts, is no true believing. And therefore in the work of self-examination, whoever would find in himself a thorough sincere work, must find an entire work; even the one of these as well as the other. In the review of which entire work, there is no doubt but his soul may take comfort. And it is not to be made so light of as most do, nor put by with a wet finger, that Scripture doth so ordinarily put repentance before faith, and make them, jointly,^z conditions of the Gospel; which repentance contains those acts of the will's aversion from sin and creatures before expressed. It is true, if we take faith in the largest sense of all,^a then it contains repentance in it; but if we take it strictly, no doubt there are some acts of it go before repentance, and some follow after.

Yet it is not of much moment which of the acts before-mentioned we shall judge to precede, whether our aversion from sin, and renouncing our idols, or our right receiving Christ, seeing it all composeth but one work, which God doth ever perfect where he beginneth but one step, and layeth but one stone in sincerity; and the moments of time can be but few that interpose between the several acts.

If any object, 'That every grace is received from Christ, and therefore must follow our receiving him by faith,' I answer, There be receivings from Christ before believing, and be-

^z Quum inter se comparantur et distinguuntur, seu distincte à nobis considerantur, salutis illius partes: tum fides respectu justificationis rationem habet conditionis prærequisitæ; nemo enim justificatur nisi per fidem; respectu autem sanctificationis (i. e. a holy life, and holy motions of the heart,) habet se ut ejus causa.—*Doctis. Ludov. Capellus, in Thes. Salmur.* vol. 2. p. 110. sect. 39.

^a As it is put for all obedience to the commands proper to the Gospel,

fore our receiving of Christ himself. Such is all that work of the Spirit, that brings the soul to Christ; and there is a passive receiving of grace before the active. Both power and act of faith are, in order of nature, before Christ, actually received; and the power of all other gracious acts is as soon as that of faith. Though Christ give pardon and salvation upon condition of believing, yet he gives not, in the first degree, a new heart, a soft heart, and faith itself, nor the first true repentance on that condition; any more than he gives the preaching of the Gospel, the Spirit's motion to believe, &c., upon a pre-requisite condition of believing.

Sect. V. 4. And as the will is thus averted from the fore-mentioned objects, so, at the same time, doth it cleave to God the Father, and to Christ. Its first acting in order of nature, is toward the whole divine essence; and it consists, especially, in intending and desiring God for his portion and chief good: having before been convinced that nothing else can be his happiness, he now finds it is in God; and therefore looks towards it. But it is yet rather with desire than hope; for, alas! the sinner hath already found himself to be a stranger and enemy to God, under the guilt of sin and curse of his law, and knows there is no coming to him in peace till his case be altered; and, therefore, having before been convinced, also, that only Christ is able and willing to do this, and having heard his mercy in the Gospel freely offered, his next act is, secondly, to accept of Christ for Saviour and Lord. I put the former before this, because the ultimate end is necessarily the first intended, and the divine essence is principally that ultimate end; (John xiv. 6;) yet not excluding the human nature in the second person: but Christ, as Mediator, is the way to that end; and, throughout the Gospel, is offered to us in such terms as import his being the means of making us happy in God. And though that former act of the soul toward the Godhead, be not said to justify as this last doth, yet is it, I think, as proper to the people of God as this; nor can any man, unregenerate, truly choose God for his Lord, his portion, and chief good; therefore do they both mistake: they who only mention our turning to Christ, and they who only mention our turning to God, in this work of conversion, as is touched before. Paul's preaching was "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." (Acts xx. 21, v. 31, xi. 18, and xxvi. 20.) And life eternal consists, first, in

knowing the only true God, and then Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent. (John xvii. 3.) The former is the natural part of the covenant, to take the Lord only for our God; the latter is the supernatural part, to take Christ only for our Redeemer. The former is first necessary, and implied in the latter.

Though repentance and good works, &c., are required to our full justification, at judgment, as subservient to, or concurrent with, faith; yet is the nature of this justifying faith itself contained in assent, and in this accepting of Christ for Saviour and Lord: and I think it necessarily contains all this in it; some place it in the assenting act only, some in a fiducial adherence, or recumbency; I call it accepting,^b it being principally an act of the will; but yet also of the whole soul. ^c This accepting being that which the Gospel presseth to, and calleth the receiving or accepting Christ: I call it an affectionate accepting, though love seem another act quite distinct from faith, and if you take faith for assent only, so it is; yet I take it as essential to that faith which justifies. To accept Christ without love, is not justifying faith. Nor doth love follow as a fruit, but immediately concur; nor concur as a mere concomitant, but essential to a true accepting. For this faith is the receiving of Christ, either with the whole soul, or with part; not with part only, for that is but a partial receiving: and most clearly, divines of late conclude, that justifying faith resides both in the understanding and the will; therefore, in the whole soul; and so cannot be one single act. I add, it is the most affectionate accepting of Christ; because he that loves father, mother, or any thing more than him, is not worthy of him, nor can be his disciple; (Luke xiv. 26;) and consequently not justified by him. And the truth of this affection^d is not to be judged so much by

^b So Dr. Preston's judgment is, and Dr. Wallis against the Lord Brook, p. 94. It is an accepting of Christ offered, rather than the belief of a proposition affirmed. So that excellent philosopher and divine. Love to Christ whether it be not essential to justifying faith; see more of this in the positions of justification. Love to Christ must be the strongest love. To accept is only *velle bonum oblatum*, and to love, as it is in the rational appetite, is only *velle bonum* too (as Aquinas often); so that faith, as it is in the will, (in its most proper act,) and love as in the same faculty towards the same object, are but two names for one thing. But this with submission. The objections are to be answered elsewhere.

^c Scriptura fere utitur verbo *λαμβάνειν*, quod propter sophistas est tutius. Illud tribuitur fidei multoties; John i. 12, ubi Jansenius, &c. et Bellarm. Credere est Christum recipere.—*Johan. Crocius de Just. Disp.* 12. p. 637.

^d Dr. Sibbs's 'Soul's Conflict.'

feeling the pulse of it, as by comparing it with our affection for other things. He that loveth nothing so much as Christ, doth love him truly, though he find cause still to bewail the coldness of his affections. ^e I make Christ himself the object of his accepting, it being not any theological axiom concerning himself, but himself in person. I call it an accepting him for Saviour and Lord. For in both relations will he be received, or not at all. ^f It is not only to acknowledge his sufferings, and accept of pardon and glory, but to acknowledge his sovereignty, and submit to his government, and way of saving; and I take all this to be contained in justifying faith. The vilest sinner among us will accept of Christ to justify and save him, if that only would serve the turn to his justification.

The work (which Christ thus accepted of, is to perform) is, to bring the sinners to God, that they may be happy in him: and this both really by his Spirit, and relatively in reconciling them, and making them sons; and to present them perfect before him at last, and to possess them of the kingdom. This will Christ perform: and the obtaining of these, are the sinner's lawful ends, in receiving Christ;^g and to these uses doth he offer himself unto us.

5. To this end doth the sinner now enter into a cordial covenant with Christ. As the preceptive part is called the covenant, so he might be under the covenant before, as also under the offers of a covenant on God's part. But he was never strictly nor comfortably in covenant with Christ till now. He is sure by the free offers, that Christ doth consent, and now doth he cordially consent, himself; and so the agreement is fully made; and it was never a match indeed till now.

6. With this covenant concurs a mutual delivery; Christ delivereth himself in all comfortable relations to the sinner, and the sinner^h delivereth up himself to be saved and ruled by

^e Fides considerat Christum ut redemptorem, adeoque sanctificationum nostrum, inquit.—*Camero Prælect.* in Matt. xviii. l. f. 78.

^f The pitch of your love, if it be a right conjugal love, is upon the person of Christ rather than any thing that comes from him, saith Burroughs on Hosea, p. 603. Irenæus, lib. l. p. 6., saith, that the Valentinians would call Christ their Saviour, but not Lord: justifying faith is the accepting Christ both for Saviour and Lord.

^g Christo servabatur, omnia retro occulta nudare, dubitata dirigere, prælibata supplere, prædicata repræsentare; mortuorum certe resurrectionem, non modo per semetipsum, verum etiam in semetipso, probare.—*Tertul. in Lib. de Resurrect. Carnis in principio*, p. 405.

^h Si igitur tradideris ei quod tuum est, id est, fidem in eum, et subjectionem,

Christ. This which I call the delivering of Christ, is his act in and by the Gospel ; without any change in himself. The change is only in the sinner to whom the conditional promises become equivalent to absolute, when they perform the conditions. Now doth the soul resolvedly conclude, I have been blindly led by the flesh and lust, and the world, and the devil, too long already, almost to my utter destruction ; I will now be wholly at the disposal of my Lord, who hath bought me with his blood, and will bring me to his glory. ¹ And thus the complete work of saving faith consisteth in this covenanting, or mystical marriage, of the sinner to Christ.

7. And lastly, I add, that the believer doth herein persevere to the end ; though he may commit sins, he never disclaimeth

percipies ejus artem, et eris perfectum opus Dei. Si autem non credideris ei, et fugeris manus ejus, erit causa imperfectionis in te, qui non obedisti ; sed non in illo qui vocavit. Ille enim misit qui vocarent ad nuptias ; qui autem non obedierunt ei, seipsos privaverunt regia cœna. Sed ille qui non consequitur eam sibi met suæ imperfectionis est causa. Nec enim lumen deficit propter eos, qui seipsos excœcaverunt, &c.—*Irenæus adv. Hæres.* lib. iv. c. 76.

¹ So Dr. Preston tells you frequently. And in the primitive times none were baptised without an express covenanting, wherein they renounced the world, flesh, and devil, and engaged themselves to Christ, and promised to obey him, as you may see in Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian, and others, at large. I will cite but one for all, who was before the rest, and this is Justin Martyr : speaking of the way of baptising the aged, he saith, “ How we are dedicated to God, being renewed by Christ, we will now open to you. As many as being persuaded, do believe these things to be true which we teach, and do promise to live according to them, they first learn by prayer and fasting to beg pardon of God for their former sins, ourselves joining also our prayer and fasting. Then they are brought to the water, and are born again, or baptised, in the same way as we ourselves were born again : for they are washed with water, in the name of the Father, the Lord and God of all, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Ghost. Then we bring the person thus washed and instructed, to the brethren, as they are called, where the assemblies are, that we may pray both for ourselves and for the illuminated person, that we may be found, by true doctrine and by good works, worthy observers and keepers of the commandments, and that we may attain eternal salvation. Then there is brought to the chief brother, (so they called the chief minister,) bread, and a cup of wine, washed, which taking, he offereth praise and thanksgiving to the Father, by the name of the Son and Holy Ghost : and so awhile he celebrateth thanksgiving. After prayers and thanksgiving, the whole assembly saith Amen. Thanksgiving being ended by the president, or chief guide, and the consent of the whole people, the deacons, as we call them, do give to every one present part of the bread and wine, over which thanks were given, and they also suffer them to bring it to the absent. This food we call the eucharist ; to which no man is admitted but only he that believeth the truth of our doctrine : being washed in the laver of regeneration for remission of sin, and that so liveth, as Christ hath taught.”—*Apol.* 2. This, then, is no new over-strict way, you see.

his Lord, renounceth his allegiance, nor recallesh, nor repenteth of his covenant, nor can be properly said to break that covenant, while that faith continues, which is the condition of it. Indeed, those that have verbally covenanted, and not cordially, may yet tread under foot the blood of the covenant, as an unholy thing, (Heb. x. 29; Matt. xxiv. 13; Rev. ii. 26, 27, and iii. 11, 12; John xv. 4—6, 9, and viii. 31; Col. i. 23; Rom. xii. 22,) wherewith they were sanctified by separation from those without the church; but the elect cannot be so deceived. Though this perseverance be certain to true believers; yet it is made a condition of their salvation, yea, of their continued life and fruitfulness, and of the continuance of their justification, though not of their first justification itself. But eternally blessed be that hand of love, which hath drawn the free promise, and subscribed and sealed to that which ascertains us, both of the grace which is the condition, and the kingdom on that condition offered.

Sect. VI. And thus you have a naked enumeration of the essentials of this people of God: not a full portraiture of them in their excellencies, nor all the notes whereby they be discerned; both which were beyond my present purpose. And though it will be part of the following application, to put you upon trial; yet because the description is now before your eyes, and these evidencing works are fresh in your memory, it will not be unseasonable, nor unprofitable for you, to take an account of your own estates, and to view yourselves exactly in this glass, before you pass on any further. And I beseech thee, reader, as thou hast the hope of a Christian, yea, or the reason of a man, to deal thoroughly, and search carefully, and judge thyself as one that must shortly be judged by the righteous God; and faithfully answer to these few questions which I shall here propound.

I will not inquire, whether thou remember the time or the order of these workings of the Spirit: there may be much uncertainty and mistake in that; but I desire thee to look into thy soul, and see whether thou find such works wrought within thee; and then, if thou be sure they are there, the matter is not so great, though thou know not when or how thou camest by them.

And first, hast thou been thoroughly convinced of an universal depravation, through thy whole soul; and an universal wickedness through thy whole life; and how vile a thing this sin is; and that by the tenor of that covenant which thou hast transgressed, the least sin deserves eternal death? Dost thou consent to this law, that it is true and righteous? Hast thou per-

ceived thyself sentenced to this death by it, and been convinced of thy natural, undone condition ? Hast thou further seen the utter insufficiency of every creature, either to be itself thy happiness, or the means of curing this thy misery, and making thee happy again in God ? Hast thou been convinced, that thy happiness is only in God as the end ; and only in Christ as the way to him, and the end also as he is one with the Father ; and perceived that thou must be brought to God by Christ, or perish eternally ? Hast thou seen hereupon an absolute necessity of the enjoying Christ ; and the full sufficiency that is in him, to do for thee whatsoever thy case requireth, by reason of the fulness of his satisfaction, the greatness of his power, and dignity of his person, and the freeness and indefiniteness of his promises ? Hast thou discovered the excellency of this pearl, to be worth thy selling all to buy it ? Hath all this been joined with some sensibility ; as the convictions of a man that thirsteth, of the worth of drink ; and not been only a change in opinion, produced by reading or education, as a bare notion in the understanding ? Hath it proceeded to an abhorring that sin ; I mean in the bent and prevailing inclination of thy will, though the flesh do attempt to reconcile thee to it ; have both thy sin and misery been a burden to thy soul ; and if thou couldst not weep, yet couldst thou heartily groan under the insupportable weight of both ? Hast thou renounced all thine own righteousness ? Hast thou turned thy idols out of thy heart ;^k so that the creature hath no more the sovereignty, but is now a servant to God and to Christ ? Dost thou accept of Christ as thy only Saviour, and expect thy justification, recovery, and glory, from him alone ? Dost thou take him also for Lord and King ? And are his laws the most powerful commanders of thy life and soul ? Do they ordinarily prevail against the commands of the flesh, of Satan, of the greatest on earth that shall countermand ; and against the greatest interest of thy credit, profit, pleasure, or life ; so that thy conscience is directly subject to Christ alone ? Hath he the highest room in thy heart and affections ; so that though thou canst not love him as thou wouldst, yet nothing

^k In one word, the very nature of sincerity lieth in this ; when Christ hath more actual interest in thy heart, esteem, and will, than the flesh ; or when Christ hath the supremacy or sovereignty in the soul ; so that his interest prevaieth against the interest of the flesh. Try by this as an infallible mark of grace.

else is loved so much? Hast thou made a hearty covenant¹ to this end with him; and delivered up thyself accordingly to him; and takest thyself for his and not thine own? Is it thy utmost care and watchful endeavour, that thou mayest be found faithful in this covenant; and though thou fall into sin, yet wouldest not renounce thy bargain, nor change thy Lord, nor give up thyself to any other government for all the world? If this be truly thy case, thou art one of these people of God which my text speaks of: and as sure as the promise of God is true, this blessed rest remains for thee. Only see thou abide in Christ, and continue to the end; for if any draw back, his soul will have no pleasure in them.

But if all this be contrary with thee, or if no such work be found within thee, but thy soul be a stranger to all this, and thy conscience tell thee, it is none of thy case; the Lord have mercy on thy soul, and open thine eyes, and do this great work upon thee, and by his mighty power overcome thy resistance: for^m in the case thou art in, there is no hope. Whatever thy deceiving heart may think, or how strong soever thy false hopes be, or though now a little while thou flatter thy soul in confidence and security; yet wilt thou shortly find to thy cost, except thy thorough conversion do prevent it, that thou art none of these people of God, and the rest of the saints belongs not to thee. Thy dying hour draws near apace, and so doth that great day of separation, when God will make an everlasting difference between his people and his enemies: then wo, and for ever wo to thee, if thou be found in the state that thou art now in. (Deut. xxxii. 25.) Thy own tongue will then proclaim thy wo, with a thousand times more dolour and vehemence, than mine can possibly do it now. O that thou wert wise to consider this, and that thou wouldest remember thy latter end! That yet while thy soul is in thy body, and a price in thy hand, and day-light, and opportunity, and hope, before thee, thine ears might be open to instruction, and thy heart might yield to the persuasions of God; and thou mightest bend all the powers of thy soul about this great work; that so thou mightest rest among his people, and enjoy

¹ Whether thy infant baptism will serve or no, I am assured thy infant covenant will not now serve thy turn: but thou must actually enter covenant in thy own person. (John xv. 4—6; Matt. xxiv. 13; Heb. x. 38, 39.)

^m I speak not this to the dark and clouded Christian, who cannot discern that which is indeed within him.

the inheritance of the saints in light ! And thus I have shown you who these people of God are.

Sect. VII. And why are they called the people of God ? You may easily from what is said discern the reasons.

1. They are the people whom he hath chosen to himself from eternity.

2. And whom Christ hath redeemed with an absolute intent of saving them ; which cannot be said of any other.

3. Whom he hath also renewed by the power of his grace, and made them in some sort like to himself, stamping his own image on them, and making them holy, as he is holy.

4. They are those whom he embraceth with a peculiar love, and do again love him above all.

5. They are entered into a strict and mutual covenant, wherein it is agreed for the Lord to be their God, and they to be his people.

6. They are brought into near relation to him, even to be his servants, his sons, and the members and spouse of his Son.

7. And lastly, they must live with him for ever, and be perfectly blessed in enjoying his love, and beholding his glory. And I think these are reasons sufficient, why they peculiarly should be called his people.

THE CONCLUSION.

And thus I have explained to you the subject of my text ; and showed you darkly, and in part, what this rest is ; and briefly who are this people of God. O that the Lord would now open your eyes, and your hearts, to discern, and be affected with the glory revealed ! That he would take off your hearts from these dunghill delights, and ravish them with the views of these everlasting pleasures ! That he would bring you into the state of this holy and heavenly people, for whom alone this rest remaineth ! That you would exactly try yourselves by the foregoing

description! That no soul of you might be so damnably deluded, as to take your natural or acquired parts, for the characters of a saint! O happy and thrice happy you, if these sermons might have such success with your souls, that so you might die the death of the righteous, and your last end might be like his! For this blessed issue, as I here gladly wait upon you in preaching, so will I also wait upon the Lord in praying.

THE
SAINT'S EVERLASTING REST.

THE SECOND PART.

CONTAINING

THE PROOFS OF THE TRUTH AND CERTAIN FUTURITY OF
OUR REST; AND THAT THE SCRIPTURE PROMISING THAT
REST TO US, IS THE PERFECT INFALLIBLE WORD AND
LAW OF GOD.

TO MY DEARLY BELOVED FRIENDS,
THE
INHABITANTS OF BRIDGNORTH,
BOTH MAGISTRATES AND PEOPLE,

RICHARD BAXTER devoteth this part of this Treatise, in testimony of his unfeigned love to them, who were the first to whom he was sent, as fixed, to publish the Gospel: and in thankfulness to Divine Majesty, who there privileged and protected him:

HUMBLY beseeching the God of mercy, both to save them from that spirit of pride, separation, and levity, which hath long been working among them; and also to awake them thoroughly from their negligence and security, by his late heavy judgments on them: and that as the flames have consumed their houses, so the Spirit of God may consume the sin that was the cause; and by those flames they may be effectually warned to prevent the everlasting flames; and that their new-built houses may have new-born inhabitants; and that the next time God shall search and try them, he may not find one house among them, where his word is not daily studied and obeyed, and where they do not fervently call upon his name.

THE PREFACE.

DIRECTED

- I. TO UNBELIEVERS AND ANTI-SCRIPTURISTS ;
 - II. TO PAPISTS ;
 - III. AND TO THE ORTHODOX.
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BECAUSE it is a point of such high concernment, to be assured of the divine authority of the Scriptures ; and all men are not of one mind in the way of proving it ; and because I have not handled this so fully as the difficulty and weight of the subject doth require, as intending only a few arguments by way of digression, for the strengthening of weaker and less exercised Christians : I have thought meet, therefore, a little more fully to express my mind in this preface, being loth to stand to enlarge the book any further. And that which I have to say, is to three sorts of persons distinctly.

The first is, to all those that believe not the truth of the Scriptures. Open pagans live not among us : but pagans professing Christianity, are of late too common, under the name of libertines, familists, seekers, and anti-scripturists. Had I not known it by experience, and had conference with such, I should not speak it. And there is a remnant of paganism and infidelity in the best of Christians. The chief causes which pervert the understanding of men in this point, in my observation, are these two : 1. When men have deeply wounded their consciences by sinning against knowledge, and given the victory to their fleshly lusts ; so that they must either deeply accuse and condemn themselves, or deny the Scriptures ; they choose that which seemeth the more tolerable and desirable to them, and so rather condemn the Scripture than themselves. And what malefactor would not do the like, and except against the law which doth condemn him, if that would serve his turn ? And when men that are engaged in a sinful course, do see that the word of God doth speak so terribly against it, they dare not live in that sin while they believe the Scripture, because it is still awaking and

galling their guilty consciences ; but when they have cast away their belief of the Scripture, then conscience will let them sin with more quietness. These men believe not the Scriptures, principally, because they would not have them to be true, rather than because they do indeed seem untrue ; for their fleshly concupiscence having mastered their wills, their wills have also mastered their understandings ; and so, as in a well-ordered, gracious soul, all goes straight forward ; in these men all is perverted, and moves backward. These men refuse their physic, because it is unpleasant, and not because it is unwholesome : yet at last their appetite so mastereth their reason, that they will not believe any thing can be wholesome which goes so much against their stomachs. At least this makes them the readier to pick a quarrel with it, and they are glad to hear of any argument against it. Ahab believed not the message of Micaiah, not because he spoke falsely, but because he spoke not good of him but evil : men will easily be drawn to believe that to be true, which they would fain have to be true ; and that to be false, which they desire should be false. But, alas, how short and silly a cure is this for a guilty soul ; and how soon will it leave them in incurable misery !

2. Another reason of those men's unbelief, is the seeming contradictions that they find in the Scriptures, and the seeming impossibilities in the doctrines of them, which so far transcend the capacity of man. To the former, let me say this much : 1. It is merely through our ignorance, that scriptures seem contradictory. I thought myself once that some places were hardly reconcilable, which now I see do very plainly agree : plainly, I say, to them that understand the true meaning of the words. There are no human writings, but lie open to such exceptions of the ignorant. It is rather a wonder that the Scriptures seem not to you more self contradicting, if you consider, but 1. That they are written in another language, and must needs lose much in the translation, there being few words to be found in any language, which have not divers significations. 2. That it being the language also of another country, to men that know not the customs, the situation of places, the proverbial speeches, and phrases of that country, it is impossible but many words should seem dark or contradictory. 3. Also, that the Scriptures are of so exceeding antiquity, as no books else in the world are like them. Now, who knows not that in all countries in the world, customs alter, and proverbial speeches and phrases alter ; which

must needs make words seem dark, even to men of the same country and language that live so long after. We have many English proverbs, which if in after ages they should cease to be proverbs, and men finding them in our writings, shall construe them as plain speeches, they would seem to be either false, or ridiculous nonsense. The like may be said of alteration of phrases. He that reads but Chaucer, much more elder writers, will see that English is scarce the same thing now, as it was then. Though the sacred languages have had no such great alterations, yet by this it may appear, that it is no wonder, if to the ignorant they seem contrary or difficult. Do not the mathematics, and all sciences, seem full of contradictions and impossibilities to the ignorant; which are all resolved and cleared to those that understand them? It is a very foolish, audacious thing, that every novice, or young student in divinity, should expect to have all difficulties resolved presently, or else they will censure the Scriptures, and speak evil of the things they know not, instead of censuring themselves; when yet these men know, that in the easiest science, yea, or basest manufacture, they must have time to learn the reasons of them. It is usual with raw scholars in all kinds of studies, to say as Nicodemus did at first of regeneration, ‘How can these things be?’^a Methinks such frail and shallow creatures, as all men are, should rather be so sensible of their own incapacity and ignorance, as to be readier to take the blame to themselves, than to quarrel with the truth. It is too large a work for me here to answer all the particular objections of these men against the several passages of Scripture: but if they would be at the pains to inquire of their teachers, or study what is written to that end, they might find that the matter is not so difficult as they imagine. Besides, what Althamar, Cumeranus, Sharpius, and others have purposely written for reconciling the seeming contradictions in Scripture, they may find much in ordinary expositors. Junius answereth two-and-twenty cavils, which Simplicius the pagan raised, and after him the antinomians used against Moses’s ‘History of the Creation.’ And he was fit for the work, having for a year’s

^a Sed quemadmodum apud eos qui semel providentiam probe perceperunt, non minuitur, aut perit fides providentiæ ob ea quæ non comprehenduntur; ita neque scripturæ divinitati per eam totam diffusæ quidquam detrahatur, ex eo quod ad singulas dictiones imbecillitas nostra non possit adesse arcano splendori doctrinæ qui in tenui et contempta locutione delitescit.—*Origen. Philocal.* (per Tarinum, Græco-Lat. edit.) pp. (mihi) 12, 13.

time continued in the desperate error of atheism himself. But the fullest confutation of these blasphemous conceits, are in the primitive fathers, as Origen against Celsus, Tertul. Athanas. &c.; where they shall find that the worst of pagans brought forth these monsters, and by what weapons they were destroyed.

2. And what, if you could not see how to reconcile the seeming contradictions of Scripture? When you see arguments sufficient to prove them to be the word of God (which I doubt not but you may see, if you will search impartially and humbly), methinks common reason might then conclude, that all that God speaks must needs be true, though our blindness hinders us from a distinct discerning of it. 2. The like I say of the seeming impossibilities in Scripture: is any thing too hard for Omnipotency itself? The atheist derides it, when he hears of the opening of the Red Sea, of the standing still of the sun, &c. But, dost thou believe that there is a God? If thou dost, thou must needs know that he is almighty: if not, thou hast put out the eye of reason; for most pagans in the world have acknowledged a God. Canst thou think that all things thou seest are made and preserved without a first cause? Do the heavens keep their courses, and the earth produce that variety of beautiful creatures, and the death of one cause the life of the other, and all kept in that order of superiority and inferiority, and all this without a first cause? If thou say that nature is the cause, I would fain know what it is that thou callest nature; either a reasonable being and cause, or an unreasonable. If unreasonable, it could not produce the reasonable spirits, as are angels, and the souls of men; for these would be more noble than itself: if reasonable, is it not then God himself which thou dost call by the name of nature? To be the first reason, being, and cause of all, is to be God. And then let me ask thee, dost thou not see as great works as these miracles every day and hour before thine eyes? Is it not as great a work for the sun to move, as to stand still: to move 10,388,442 miles an hour, being 166 times bigger than all the earth? Is it not as hard a matter for the sea to move, and keep his times in ebbing and flowing, as for it to open and stand still? Is it not only the rarity and strangeness that makes us think one impossible, when we see the other daily come to pass? If it were but usual for the sun to stand still, every man would think it a far more incredible thing that it should move, and so move. Why, then, cannot God do the lesser, who daily doth the greater? The like I might say of all the rest, but that

it were too long to insist on them ; and for the truth of the history, it is proved afterwards.

2. I would further ask these men : Must not a soul that is capable of immortal happiness, have some guide in the way thereto ? If they say no, then they either think God unfaithful or unskilful, who having appointed man an end, hath not given him direction thereto in the means. If they doubt whether man's soul be immortal, and whether there be a life of happiness to some, and misery to others, to be expected after this, I have said enough against that doubt in this book following ; and further let me ask them,^b How comes it to be the common judgment of all nations, even the most ignorant Indians, that there is a life after this, where the good and the bad shall be differently recompensed ? This the ancient barbarians believed, as Herodotus testifieth of the Getæ, (lib. iv. ;) and of the Egyptians, Diodorus Siculus, (lib. i. Biblioth. numb. 93.) The very inhabitants of Guinea, Virginia, Guiana, Peru, China, Mexico, &c., do believe this, as you may see, 'Descrip. Reg. Africæ, Guianæ,' (cap. 21, 24. ;) Acost. (lib. v. c. 7, 8 ;) Hugh Luiscot. (part. i. cap. 25 ;) Joannes Lerijs, (cap. 16 ;) Sir Walter Raleigh,

^b Socrates being near death, (apud Platonem, Cicerone interprete,) said thus : "Magna me spes tenet, judices, bene mihi evenire quod mittar ad mortem. Necesse est enim ut sit alterum de duobus, ut aut sensus omnino mors omnes auferat, aut in alium quendam locum ex his locis morte migretur. Quamobrem, sive sensus extinguitur, morsque ei somno similis est, qui nunquam etiam sine visis somniorum, pacatissimam quietem affert ; Dii boni, quid lucri est emori ? aut quam multi dies reperiri possunt, qui tali nocti anteponantur ? &c. Sin vera sunt quæ dicuntur, migrationem esse mortem in eas oras, quas qui vita excesserunt, incolunt ; id multo jam beatius est, te, cum ab iis, qui se judicum numero haberi volunt, evaseris, ad eos venire, qui vere judices appellantur, &c. convenireque eos qui justi et cum fide vixerint. Hæc peregrinatio mediocris vobis videri potest ? Ut vero colloqui cum Orphæo, Musæo, Homero, Hesiodo, liceat, quanti tandem æstimatis ? Equidem sæpe mori si fieri posset, vellem, ut ea quæ dico, mihi liceret invenire. Quanta delectatione autem afficeret, &c. Ne vos quidem, judices, ii qui me absolvistis mortem timueritis ; nec enim cuiquam bono mali quidquam evenire potest, nec vivo nec mortuo ; nec unquam ejus res à Diis immortalibus negligeretur, &c. Sic Socrates. Quædam et natura nota sunt, ut immortalitas animæ penes plures, ut Deus noster penes omnes. Utar ergo et sententia Platonis alicujus pronuntiantis, omnis anima est immortalis. Utar et conscientia populi contestantis Deum Deorum. Utar et reliquis communibus sensibus, qui Deum judicem prædicant 'Deus videt' et 'Deo commendo.' At cum aiunt 'mortuum quod mortuum' et 'vive dum vivis' et post mortem omnia finiuntur, etiam ipsa] tunc meminero et cor vulgi cinerem a Deo deputatum, et ipsam sapientiam seculi stultitiam pronuntiatam. Tunc si et hæreticus ad vulgi vitia vel seculi ingenia confugerit, discede, dicam ab Ethnico, hæretice, etsi unum estis omnes," &c.—*Tertul. lib. de Resurrect. Carn. cap. 3.*

&c. What poets speak not de Tartaro, campis Elysiis, Manibus? and so do philosophers of best note, except Galen, Epicurus, Plinius, &c. As for Pythagoras, and his master, Pherecides, the Druids, the Indian Brahmins, Socrates, Plato, Cicero, Seneca, they all acknowledge it. *Lege Marcilium Ficinum 'de Immort. Anim. ;' yea, Aristotle himself saw this, as appeareth 'De Anima,' (lib. i. context. 65, 66, lib. ii. context. 21, lib. iii. context. 4, 6, 7, 19, 20.)* Sure then the light of nature discerneth it.

Yet, if these men say that there must be a guide and law for souls in their way to happiness, and yet deny that the Scripture is it, I would fain know of them which is it, and where it is to be found. Hath God any other word or law in the world above this? Sure, neither Plato nor Aristotle did ever call their books the word of God; and Mahomet's '*Alcoran*' is far more unlike to be it than theirs. If they say that reason is the only guide and law, I reply, 1. Reason is but the eye by which we see our directory and law, and not the directory and law itself: 2. Look on those countries through the world that have no Scripture-guides, but follow their reason, and see how they are guided, and what difference there is between them and Christians, as bad as we are; and if you think of this well, you will be ashamed of your error. Indians have reason, as well as we; nay, look into the wise Romans, and the great learned philosophers, who had advanced their reason so high, and see how lamentably they were befooled in spirituals; how they worshipped multitudes of idols, even taking them for their gods, whom they acknowledged to be lecherous, adulterous, perfidious, bloody, and wicked. Read but Justin's '*Apolog.*' Athenagoras, '*Tertullian's 'Apolog.,'*' &c., Origen's '*Cont. Cels.*' Arnobius, Lactantius, Clemens Alexand. Protreptic. Minutius Felix, Athanas., &c., fully of this. Most certainly, either the Scriptures are God's word and law, or else there is none in the known world; and if there be none, how doth the just, true, and righteous God govern the rational creature, so as to lead him to the happiness prepared for him? But of this in the fourth argument following.

3. I would entreat these men, but soberly, to consider this: what if there were no full, absolute certainty of the truth of Scripture or christian religion, but it were only probable, which no considerate man can deny, were it not the wisest way to receive it? What, if it should prove true that there is a hell for the wicked, what a case are you in then! You know your

worldly happiness is a very dream and a shadow, and a brutish delight, which is mixed with misery, and quieteth not the soul, and perisheth in the using. If you do lose it, you lose but a toy, a thing of nothing, which you must shortly lose whether you will or no ; but if you lose heaven, and fall into endless misery, it is another kind of loss. Methinks, then, that common reason should persuade men to venture all, though it were at uncertainty, upon that religion which tells us but of a possibility of a heaven and a hell, rather than to venture on a possibility of everlasting misery, for a little bestial pleasure, which is gone while we are enjoying it ; yea, and when even in this life these sensual men have not near so much content as the Christian. Verily, if I doubted of the truth of the christian religion, I durst not be of any other ; but should judge it the wisest course, to venture all I had in this world upon the hopes that it propoundeth ; yea, mere madness to do otherwise. If men that are at a lottery will venture a small sum for a possibility of a great one, though they know there is but one of twenty that shall get it, how much more would any wise man leave a little vanity, in hope of everlasting glory, and to avoid everlasting misery, though it were uncertain : but, most of all, when we have that full certainty of it as we have !

4. Lastly : I would have these men consider, that though we doubt not but to prove that Scripture is God's full and infallible law, yet, if it were so that this could not be proved, this would not overthrow the christian religion. If the Scriptures were but the writings of honest men, that were subject to mistakes and contradictions, in the manner and circumstances, yet they might afford us a full certainty of the substance of Christianity, and of the miracles wrought to confirm the doctrine. Tacitus, Suetonius, Livy, Florus, Lucan, &c., were all heathens, and very fallible ; and yet their history affords us a certainty of the great substantial passages of the Roman affairs which they treat of, though not of all the smaller passages and circumstances. He that doubteth whether there was such a man as Julius Cæsar, or that he fought with Pompey and overcame him, &c., is scarce reasonable, if he knew the histories ; so, though Matthew Paris, Malmsbury, Hoveden, Speed, Cambden, and our own parliaments that enacted our laws, were all fallible men, and mistaken in divers smaller things, yet they afford us a full certainty that there was such a man as William the Conqueror, William Rufus, &c. ; that there were such parliaments, such lords, such fights

and victories, &c. He that would not venture all that he hath on the truth of these, especially to gain a kingdom by the venture, were no better in this than mad. Now, if Scripture were but such common writings as these, especially joined with the uncontrolled tradition that hath since conveyed it to us, may it not yet give us a full certainty that Christ was in the flesh, and that he preached this doctrine for the substance, and wrought these miracles to confirm it, and enabled his followers to work the like, which will afford us an invincible argument for our Christianity? Therefore, Grotius, &c., and so the old fathers, when they disputed with the heathens, did first prove the truth of christian religion before they came to prove the divine authority of the Scriptures; not that we are at any such uncertainty, or that any Christian should take up here, as if the Scriptures were not infallible and divine; but being now speaking to another sort of men according to their capacity, I say, if it were otherwise, yet might we have certainty of our religion. I shall say somewhat more to these men in speaking to the rest.

The second sort that I shall speak to, are the papists. I find the chief thing that turns them from the reformed churches, and confirms them against us, is, because they think they cannot otherwise maintain their Christianity, but by deriving it from their church. The first question, therefore, that papists will dispute on with us, is, ‘How know you the Scriptures to be the word of God?’ For they fondly suppose, that because it cannot be known without the help of tradition, or human testimony, that, therefore, this must be only the testimony of the true church, and that must be some visible church, and that church must be presently in being, and must be judge in the case, and must be infallible in the judging; and all this can agree to no other church; and, therefore, that theirs is the only true church. And thus the particular church of Rome will prove herself the only or universal church. To stand here to confute these vain, ungrounded conclusions, would be to digress too far, and make this preface too long. Yet something I wrote against their pretended papal infallibility, and of the uncertainty of their faith; but, being persuaded by others to insert no more controversy here, I reserve it for a fitter place. Only I would desire briefly any papist to show, whether their doctrine do not leave the whole christian faith at utter uncertainty, and consequently destroy it, as much as in them lies? For seeing they build all upon the supposed infallibility of the church and

that church^c is the present church, and that is the Roman church only; and that is only the pope, as the Jesuits and most papists say; or a general council, as the French: see what a case they bring Christianity to with their followers! Every man that will believe the Scripture, yea, or the christian faith, must,

1. Believe or know that Rome is the true church.
2. That it hath authority to judge of God's word, and of the christian faith, which is truly it, and which not.
3. That this authority was given by God's word (this must be known, before men can know that God hath a word, or what it is).
4. That they are infallible in their judgment.
5. That Peter was at Rome, and was their bishop, and conferred this sovereignty on them as his successors.

6. That each particular pope is a true pope, and lawfully called; which all the world must know, that know neither him, nor when, nor how, he was called.
7. That the pope determines it as a matter of faith; otherwise, they confess he may err, and be an heretic.
8. And they must know where is the proper subject of infallibility, whether in the pope or council, or they know not which to build on, which yet they are far from agreeing on themselves.
9. When two or three popes sit together, which is no new thing, the world must know which is the right, for all the rest may err.
10. Or, if they join a council in the infallibility, they must be certain that Christ hath given councils this infallibility.
11. And that this is only to a council of Romanists.
12. And so that the Roman church is the universal church, and not only a part, as other churches are.
13. And that they are free from error in council, and not out of it.
14. That the council be general and lawful, else they confess it may err.
15. Therefore, all men must be certain that it be summoned by the pope.
16. And that the bishops that constitute it, are lawfully called.
17. And that the pope doth ratify the acts

^c Vide Greg. 'de Valent.' tom. iii. disp. 1. quæst. 1. punct. 7. sect. 12: et Bellarmin. lib. ii. 'de Sacrament.' in gen. cap. xxv.: et Suarez. 'de Fide,' disputat. v. sect. 4, 7; et disputat. xi. sect. 3: Bellar. lib. i. 'de Conciliis,' c. 4. et 19. et lib. ii. c. 2. Yet sometimes they seem so pious as to prefer the Scripture before the church. Nunquam sane mihi venit in mentem ecclesiæ judicium sacrorum voluminum authoritati anteferre, quæ Spiritus cœlestis afflatu exarata fuisse cum Petro confitemur, cum et pueri, qui ne primoribus quidem labris divina monumenta attigerunt, satis intelligant, veræ ecclesiæ rationem sine verbi Dei integritate, quæ fidei sedes est atque fundamentum, constare ullo modo posse, &c.—*Payva D'Audard. Defens. Conc. Trident. cont. Kemnit.* lib. ii. p. (mibi) 202. Sed de aliorum impudentia, vide Cathol. Orthodox. tract. l. q. ix. p. 94.

of this council, as well as call the councils ; else they conclude that they are unlawful, or may be fallible. He that knows not all these, cannot be certain that Scripture is God's word, no, nor of the truth of the christian faith, according to the papists' grounds. And can all the world be certain of them ; or, are all their laicks certain ; yea, or their clergy ; yea, or any man ? Adrian VI. tells us, ' that the pope is fallible : ' and shall we not believe the pope himself, confessing his own ignorance ? though councils have decreed against councils, and popes against popes, over and over. Yet we must needs believe them infallible, or forfeit our Christianity according to their doctrine : that is, we must either renounce both experience, sense, and reason, or our faith. Is not this the way to drive the world again to heathenism ? And whether all the world lose not the certainty of their Christianity, when there is an *interregnum* upon the death of a pope, let them further study. I am fully certain, that the christian world in Peter's days, did never pretend to hold their faith upon his mere infallibility. Nor did Justin, Irenæus, Tertullian, Cyprian, or any of the ancientest that ever I met with, hold their belief of Christ or Scripture on the infallibility of the bishop of Rome. The contrary I shall manifest in a more convenient place. I will only add this question : ' How doth the pope and his council know the Scripture to be God's word ? ' If they believe it on their own authority, that is, because themselves say so, then they are self-idolizers. And what makes them affirm it to be so ; or what reason have they for their belief ? If they believe by any convincing reason, proving Scripture to be a divine testimony, then why may not the clergy, out of council, and others also, believe on the same grounds ? Else the faith of the pope and his council will not have the same grounds with the faith of the people or church besides ; and then it is another faith ; and so either the people or the pope are heretics. And why are we blamed for not believing on the authority of the pope and council, when the pope and council themselves believe not on that, that is, their own authority ? I hope they will not turn enthusiasts, and pretend to private extraordinary revelations of the Spirit. If they say, they receive the Scripture by tradition of the ancient church, and so on their credit ; why may we not know, as well as they, what the ancients say in the point ? And is it not the honestest way, if they knew more herein than we, to produce it, and show us what and where the ancients speak ? If they have it merely

upon verbal tradition, have not other men as good ears as the pope and his council; and, therefore, being as honest, to be as well credited in such reports? And if it be their office to keep traditions,^d have they been so careless as to lose all the rest of the things which Jesus did, which John saith will fill so many volumes; and also the traditions which themselves suppose Paul to have delivered unwritten to the Thessalonians and others? Shall we believe them infallible, that have already so deceived us?

And for those that think it of absolute necessity, that the church have some judge for final decision of controversies about the sense of Scripture; and that judge it so absurd a thing for every man to be judge; and, therefore, they think we must needs come to Rome for a judge. 1. I would know whether they speak of fundamentals, and such other points as are plain in Scripture, or smaller points that are dark: for the former, what need is there of a judge? No Christian denieth fundamentals, and heathens will not stand to the papal infallibility. A teacher, indeed, is necessary for the ignorant, but not a judge. It is the vilest doctrine that almost ever Rome did forge, that fundamentals themselves are such to us, because they determine them; and that we cannot know them but on their authority: yea, the church (that is the pope) may by his determination make new fundamentals. If they were not impudent, this abomination would never have found so many patrons. They ask us, how we know fundamentals; and which be they? I answer, Those things which God hath made the conditions of salvation. And what if we take in both them and more, that so we may be sure not to miss of them, so we go but to plain and weighty truths, what danger is that? 2. Seeing all Christians in the world do hold the fundamentals (else they are not truly Christians), why are they not fit deciders or judges of them, as well as the pope? 3. And for lesser and darker points, by what means is the pope

^d So far have the Romanists been from being faithful keepers of their pretended additional traditions, that by depraving the monuments of antiquity, and by adding a multitude of legends and forged writings, to advance their own ends, they have done the church of Christ more wrong than ever they are able to repair; as the late King truly told the Marquis of Worcester in his printed conference. But the vanity and forgery of their pretended monuments is fully manifested by our Dr. James, and Cook's '*Censura Patrum*,' Erasmus, Davenant, Blondellus, (on the by, in all his writings,) but most fully in his '*Examen Decretalem*;' so our Dr. J. Reynolds, on other parts; and many more have opened their folly.

and his council able to determine them, and to decide the controversy? If by any rational means, what are they? and why may not as rational men decide it as truly? 4. Will it not be as hard a question, who shall judge of the meaning of the pope's decretals or canons, where they are doubtful? and so *in infinitum*. I see not but the council of Trent speaks as darkly as the Scripture, and is as hard to be understood. 5. If God leave a point dark and doubtful, will it not remain so, whatsoever confident men may determine? 6. If God have left a certain means, and infallible judge, for determining all controversies, and expounding scriptures, why then is it not done, but the church left still in such uncertainties and contentions? As some anabaptists among us do boast of a power to work miracles, and yet we can get none of them to show their power in one; just so doth the church of Rome boast of an infallibility in deciding of controversies, yet they will not infallibly decide them. If they should grow modest, and say, they do not determine what is certain in itself, but what we are to rest in; I answer, so Christ thought them not all fit to be decided, and therefore hath left many in doubtfulness; and is it not as fit that we should rest in Christ's decision, and his judgment concerning points, fit to be cleared and decided, as in man's? The palpable mistake of that one text, 2 Pet. i. 20, that no scripture is of private interpretation, hath misled many men in this point; for they think it speaks of the quality of the interpreter, as if private men must not interpret it; when the text plainly speaks of the quality of the subject. The true paraphrase is evidently this, q. d. Besides the voice from heaven, giving testimony to Christ, we have also in the Old Scriptures a sure word of prophecy testifying of him (for to him give all the prophets witness), whereunto ye do well to take heed, as to a light shining in a dark place, &c. But then you must understand this, that no prophecy of Christ in the Old Testament is of private interpretation; that is, it is not to be interpreted as speaking only of those private persons who were but types of Christ, of whom indeed it literally and first speaks. For though it might seem as if the prophets spoke of themselves, or of the type only, who was a private person, yet indeed it is Christ that the Spirit that spake by them intended: for the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man that spoke them, and therefore is not to be interpreted privately of themselves, or what they might seem to intend; but holy men spoke as they were moved by

the Holy Ghost : and therefore his meaning must be looked to, and he intended Christ the antitype. For example, David said, "Yet will I set my King on my holy hill of Zion." (Psal. ii.) You must not interpret this of David only, a private person and but a type ; but of Christ the public person, and antitype.

But I must spend no more words here on this kind of manner.

Let me adventure on a few words to the ministers of the Gospel ; not of advice (for that was judged presumptuous in my last, though but to the younger) but of apology. Though the acceptance of this treatise be far beyond what I expected ; yet some have signified to me their dislike of some things in this second part, of which I think it my duty to tender them satisfaction.

1. Some say it is a digression. Answ. And what hurt is that to any man ? I confess it was fitted at first to my own use (as all the rest was), and why may it not be useful to somebody else ? My business was not to open a text ; but to help Christians to enjoy the solid comforts which their religion doth afford ; the greatest hinderance whereof in my observation, is a weak or unsound belief of the truth of it. And, therefore, I still think that the very main work lieth in strengthening their belief. So that I am sure I digressed not from the way that led to my intended end.

2. Others have told me that I should not have mixed controversy with such practical matter. Answ. And some, as wise, tell me they had rather all were omitted than this. For the truth must be known before the goodness will be desired or delighted in. It seems to me the ordinary cause of backsliding, when men either begin at the affections, or bestow most of their labour there, before they have laid a good foundation in the understanding. And they are scarce likely to be the longest winded Christians, nor to die for their religion, that scarce know why they are Christians. Methinks it is preposterous for men to bestow ten or twenty years in studying the meaning of God's word, before they well know or can prove that it is God's word. As the Italians mentioned by Melancthon, that disputed earnestly, that Christ was really in the bread, when they did not well believe that he was in heaven. If fundamentals be controverted, it concerns us to be well seen in such controversies. However, if this be unuseful to any man, if he will but let it alone, it will do him no harm.

3. Some blame me for making so much use of the argument from miracles ; and, withal, they think it invalid, except it be

apparent truth which they are brought to confirm. Answ. 1. If it be first known to be truth, there need no miracles to prove it. 2. Do not all our divines use this argument from miracles? 3. And I do not by using this, hinder any man from producing or using as many more as he can. I nowhere say, that this is the only argument. 4. If these men were as wise as they should be, they would take heed of shaking the christian cause, and striking at the very root of it, for the maintaining of their conceits. 5. If they take down the chief arguments which confirm it, what do they less? 6. Search the Scripture, and see, whether this were not the chief argument, 1. Which succeeded then for bringing men to believe; 2. And which Christ himself laid the greatest weight on, and expected most from, Nathaniel believing upon Christ's telling him of his conference at a distance. (John ii. 48, 49.) Upon his beginning of miracles at Cana, in Galilee, he manifested forth his glory, and his disciples believed on him. (John ii. 11.) The Jews, therefore, inquired for signs, as that which must confirm any new revelation to be of God. (John ii. 18, and vi. 30; 1 Cor. i. 22.) And though Christ blame them for their unreasonable, unsatisfied expectations herein, and would not humour them in each particular, that they would saucily prescribe him; yet still he continued to give them miracles, as great as they required. Though he would not come down from the cross to convince them (for then how should he have suffered for sin?) yet he would rise again from the dead, which was far greater. They that saw the miracle of the loaves, said, "This is of a truth the prophet that should come into the world," (John vi. 14.) "John," say they, "did no miracle; but all that John spake of this man was true: and many believed on him there." (John x. 41.) "Many believed when they saw the miracles which he did." (John ii. 23. See also Acts iv. 16; John vi. 2, vii. 31, xi. 47; Acts vi. 8, and viii. 6, 13; Gal. iii. 5; Acts ii. 43; iv. 30, v. 12; vii. 36, xiv. 3; Heb. ii. 4.) And Christ himself saith, "If I had not done the works that no man else could do, ye had had no sin in not believing." (John xv. 24.) And therefore he promiseth the Holy Ghost to his disciples, to enable them to do the like to convince the world. (Mark xvi. 17, 18.) Yea, to do greater works than he has done. (John xiv. 12.) And he upbraideth, and most terribly threateneth the unbelievers that had seen his mighty works. (Matt. xi. 20, 21, 23; Luke x. 13.) Yea, the blaspheming of the power by which he wrought them, and his disciples afterwards were to work them, and ascribing them to the devil, he maketh the unpardonable sin.

(Matt. xii. 31, 32) See also Matt. xi. 2—4, xiii. 54, and xiv. 2; Mark vi. 2, 14; John v. 19, 20, and vii. 3.) He tells them, “The works that I do, bear witness of me.” (John v. 36, and 10, 25.) “Believe not me, believe the works that I do.” (John x. 37, 38.) “Believe me for the very works’ sake.” (John xiv. 11.) And how did the apostles preach to convince the world; but partly by telling them of Christ’s resurrection, the greatest of all his miracles, and his other works; and partly, by doing miracles themselves? They tell them, he was approved of God by signs and wonders. (Acts ii. 22, and vii. 36.) They declared also what miracles and wonders were wrought by the apostles. (Acts xv. 12.) And Paul vindicated the credit of his own apostleship, and so the truth of his testimony, to the Corinthians thus: “Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs and wonders, and mighty deeds.” (2 Cor. xii. 12.) The way of bringing men to believe in those days, is thus expressed, “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by them that heard him?” (Heb. ii. 3, 4.) There is sense to the first receivers, and then tradition to the next. “God also bearing them witness both with signs and wonders, and divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his will.”^e And who dare question this witness of God? And fear fell on them all, and the name of Jesus was magnified, and men converted by the special miracles that Paul did. (Acts xix. 11, 12, 16—19.) I will say no more to the opposers of the sufficiency of this argument, but wish them to answer or learn of that blind man, (John ix. 16;) Can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? We know that God heareth not sinners. Or, hear Nicodemus, We know thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles, except God be with him; John iii. 2. Natural reason shows us, that God being the true and merciful Governor of the world, the course of nature cannot be altered, but by his special appointment, and that he will never set the seal of his omnipotency to a lie; nor suffer the last and greatest inducement of belief, to be used to draw men to falsehood: for then how deplorable were the condition of mankind!

Object. But you will say, False prophets may arise and show signs. And antichrist shall come with lying wonders. Answ.

^e Observe this text well, and it will help you to answer the question, How know you the Scripture to be the word of God?

These are all lying wonders, indeed ; seeming to be miracles, when they are not. Object. But the great question is, how we shall know which are miracles indeed, when poor mortals may be so easily deceived by superior powers? Answ. For the difference between true miracles and false, Camero, Prideaux, and most divines that write of this argument, have handled it; to whom I refer you. I will only say this more, that we need not be curious in this inquiry. For if any doubt, whether miracles may not be wrought to delude, I would add these qualifications to that medium, and thus form the major proposition, that doctrine, or those books, which were attested by apparent, frequent, and uncontrolled miracles, must needs be of God. But such is this, &c.; a wonder wrought once or twice, may easier deceive, than that which is done one hundred times. A wonder in a corner may be blazed falsely to be a miracle; but Christ had so many thousand witnesses, as of the miracle and the loaves ; and five hundred at once that saw him after his resurrection, and the apostles appealed to whole churches, even when they had secret adversaries, who might easily have disproved them, if it had not been true ; and they spake with tongues before people of many nations ; and it was not one, nor one hundred, but the multitudes of Christians that had one gift or other of this sort, either miracles especially so called, or healing, or prophesying, or tongues, &c. (See 1 Cor. xii. from ver. 1 to 12, and Mark xvi. 17.)

But especially no uncontrolled miracles shall ever be used to deceive the world. Two ways doth God control even the seeming miracles of deceivers. 1. By doing greater in opposition to them, and so disgracing and confounding them, and the authors, and the cause. So God did by the magicians in Egypt ; by the exorcist, in Acts xix ; and by Simon Magus, as church history tells us. In this case, it is no disparagement to God's mercy or faithfulness, to let men work false wonders ; for he doth but make them the occasion of his triumph, that the victory of truth may be more eminent, and men's faith more confirmed. 2. Also, by some clear and undoubted truth, either known to common reason, or by former scriptures, doth God often control deceiving wonders. For if they are used to attest an undoubted falsehood, then the former established truth contradicting them, is sufficient controlment. So that, as God will never set his own proper seal of a true miracle to an untruth, so neither will he suffer a seeming miracle to go uncontrolled when it may endanger the faith and

safety of mankind. Nor can it be shown that ever he did otherwise ; whereas, the miracles of Christ and his disciples were uncontrolled, frequent, numerous, apparent, prevalent, and triumphant.

Object. Then if miracles be wrought now, they will infer a new Scripture.

Ans. No such matter ; they will prove the testimony to be divine, where it is certain that they are wrought to confirm any testimony ; but no more. God may work them without man, to stir up men's hearts, and rouse them to repentance,^f and not to confirm any new testimony ; or he may enable men to work them for attestation of formerly-revealed truth.

Object. But wicked men may do miracles.

Ans. But not when they please, nor for what they please, but as God pleases. Wicked men may be witnesses of the truth of God.

I conclude with the argument, That which was the great argument used by Christ and his apostles to win the world to believe, should be the great argument now for every man to use to that end with himself and others ; but that was this from miracles ; therefore, &c.

4. The same men that make this exception are offended, that I over-pass some other arguments, which are taken to be the chiefest ; as scripture efficacy, and the witness of the Holy Ghost to the consciences of believers.

Ans. 1. Why should I be tied to do that which so many have done already ? 2. I never intended the full handling of the point, but two or three arguments to strengthen the weak. And may I not choose which I thought fittest, as long as I hinder no man to use what other he please ? 3. The efficacy is either on the understanding, or on the will and affections. If on the understanding, then it is the belief of scripture-truth which is thus effected : and so the argument should run thus : Whatsoever is so effectual as to persuade men of its truth or divinity, that is true or divine ; but the Scripture is such, &c. I need not speak of the major. § Or if the efficacy be on the will and affections, then it presupposeth, that it is first believed to be true. For nothing works on the will, but by means of the understanding. But I neither dare, nor need to show the weak-

^f Vide Suarez 'de Fide,' disp. iv. sect. 10.

§ Lege R. Baronium Apol. tract. ix. punct. 6. assert. 3. pp. 729, 730. plenissime.

ness of such arguments ; the papists have done too much in it, as their writings generally will show you. See Vane, Cressy, Richworth's 'Dialogues,' Martin, Stapleton ; and most run that way.

4. ^h And for the testimony of the Spirit, it consisteth, 1. In its testimony by the miracles which it enabled the apostles to effect for the sealing of their doctrine. 2. And in the sanctifying illumination of our understandings to see that which is objectively revealed. So that this testimony is the efficient and not objective cause of our belief in this latter sense. If men should judge of the canon of Scripture by the immediate testimony of the Spirit, as if this were some exterior revealer of what is divinely inspired, we should then have as great variety of canons almost as of persons. Men talk of this in mere disputes, but I know not the man that would undertake to determine of the canon by retiring into his heart, and consulting merely with the Spirit within him.

5. Another great exception of the same men is, that I seek to satisfy reason so much of the Scripture's authority : and the reasons which they urge against my reasoning, are these two. It is too near the Socinian way. Answ. Socinians will believe nothing without reason or evidence from the nature of the thing revealed : that is, they believe nothing at all as certain : for if the thing be evident, it is, as such, the object of knowledge, and not of belief. I will believe any thing in the world which I know certainly that God speaks or revealeth ; though the thing in itself seem ever so unreasonable. For I have reason to believe, or rather to know, that all is true which God revealed, how improbable soever to flesh and blood. Is it not a shame that learned men should charge this very opinion in Chillingworth, Dr. Hammond, and others, as guilty of Socinianism ? and thereby, 1. Make the papists brag, that we cannot confute them, but on Socinian principles ;ⁱ 2. And make young scholars, through prejudice, turn off from the true ways of defending scripture

^h Vide Doctis. Rob. Baron Apodix. ad Jos. Turnebulum, p. 626, 629 ; et tract. ix. pp. 2, 96, et 733. Maximopere damnamus illos qui, &c. Vide etiam Vegam. lib. ix. ; 'De Justificat.' c. 47 ; Greg. Valent. tom. iii. disp. 1. quæst. 1. punct. 1. sect. 5 ; et Suarez. disp. iii. 'de Fide,' sect. 3 ; et cont. vide Stapleton. 'Controv.' iv. quæst. 3, art. ii. resp. ad arg. 1 ; et in 'Defens. Authoritat. Eccles.' lib. iii. cap. 12. sect. 11 ; Malder, in ii. 2, quæst. 1. art. 1, sect. 8 ; 'Mel. Canit.' lib. ii. de loc. cap. 8.

ⁱ Read Videlius's 'Rationale Theolog. against Veronius,' and throughout, how far reason and natural principles may be used in disputes of divinity.

authority; to the great wrong, (1.) Of their own souls. (2.) And of their people. (3.) And of the protestant. (4.) And christian cause. 3. And how could all the wits of the world do more to advance Socinianism than these men do, by making men believe that only the Socinians have reason for their religion? which if it were true, as nothing less, who would not turn to them? 4. And what more can be done to the disgrace and ruin of Christianity, than to make the world believe that we have no reason for it? nor are able to prove it true against an adversary? What would these men do if they lived among Christ's enemies, and were challenged to defend their religion, or prove it true? Would they say, as they say to me, 'I will believe and not dispute?' Christ's cause would then be little beholden to them. And how would they preach for the conversion of infidels, if they had not reason to give them, for what they persuade them to? How will they try the spirits, and try all things, and hold fast that which is good, but by discourse? But it seems, these men themselves have no more reason for their believing in Christ, than in Mahomet or antichrist. They are good Christians and teachers that while!

But the great argument is this, They say, and great ones write so, that the divine authority of Scripture is, *principium indemonstrabile*, a principle not to be proved, but believed; for no science proves its principles.

To which I answer, 1. When our R. Baronius and others do affirm it to be *principium indemonstrabile*, it is not as if it were not at all demonstrable, but that it is not *demonstrabile per aliam revelationem*; but they acknowledge that it contains in it those characters of the divine authority, which by reason or discourse may be discerned. 2. It is therefore improper to say it is *credendum*, a thing to be believed first, and directly, that these books are God's word, seeing it is, by consequence, confessed that it is a point to be known by the aforesaid evidence; therefore, not first to be believed. 3. And, otherwise, they contradict themselves when they bestow whole volumes to prove that it is part of the formal object of faith, (which answers the *cur credis?*) and yet to affirm it to be *principium primo credendum*, which makes it the material object of faith; for in this sense it cannot be both, as I shall show. 4. How the divine authority of Scripture is the *principium religionis Christianæ*, and how not, would hold a long debate of itself. Our R. Baronius himself saith, that when we say all Christians should resolve their

faith into the divine and canonical authority of Scripture, they do not mean that this is the only way of resolving faith, as if no other way were possible or available to salvation, but only that this way is the most convenient, profitable, and certain; yea, and is necessary, too, in those churches where the Scriptures are known, ‘Apolog. advers. Turnebul.’ (Tract. i. cap. 2, Observ. i. pag. 46,) which words show how far Scripture is a *principium*. 5. As theology, Christianity, and all religion, do presuppose reason, as all morality presupposeth naturalty, so it is evident that some of the principles of religion, or of Christianity, must be first proved by reason; and so we may compare it to those inferior sciences, whose principles must be proved by superior sciences, though not by the same science. Though Scripture, in point of excellency, should not be said to be inferior to reason, yet in point of order it may, as still pre-requiring or pre-supposing reason; as the form is after the matter, and the habit after the faculty. 6. Those characters of divine authority which divines mention, may, at least some of them, be demonstrated to others, as prophecies fulfilled, and all to ourselves; therefore, the scripture authority is not an indemonstrable principle. 7. The very being of all belief lieth in this, that it be an assent to the truth of an enunciation on the credit of the testifier or revealer. Now, if we must first believe Scripture to be God’s word, and not know it, then we must believe it on the credit of the revealer; and then it is by some other revelation, or by itself. If by some other, then how know I that other revelation to be of God? and so *in infinitum*; but if I believe it to be of God, because it revealeth itself to be so, as our divines say, then this self-revelation is, 1. Either by way of proper testimony, or, 2. By objective evidence, to be discerned by reason. If the former, which must be said, or it cannot be the material object of faith; then either I must believe every book that affirms itself to be divine, or else I must have some reason to believe this, so affirming of itself, more than others; and these reasons will be things known and not believed. But if the latter, by objective evidence,^k which is it that divines generally say, then why do they

^k Vide Baron. tract. 9. per totum. Authoritatem Scripturæ duplici modo Deus apud nos contestatur. 1. In eo quod eandem ornavit notandis qualitatibus et prærogativis supra omnia humana scripta. 2. In eo quod omnium suorum corda spiritu suo afficit; ut agnoscant veritatem suam in scriptis illis micantem.—*Rivet. Catholic. Orthodox. in Tractat. primo quæst. xii. p. 131. col. 2.*

not observe that this is to unsay what they have said, and to say plainly, that it is a thing to be known, and not strictly believed, that this is God's revelation? Things evident, are the objects of knowledge; things testified, are the objects of faith, as testified.

8. Yet I confess, that when we first know this or that to be a divine testimony, we may, in a second place, believe it; for it is revealed in Scripture, "Thus saith the Lord," &c.: and so the same thing may be, and is, the object of knowledge, and of belief; but it must, in the rational order, be known first, and not believed first; for, else, as is said, I should believe every writing so affirming itself divine, or else believe the affirmation of this without evidence and reason. 9. And, indeed, what else can be the meaning of our divines, when they tell us that all faith is resolved into the credit or authority of the testifier and revealer? as our Baronius, 'Apol. cont. Turnebul.' (Tract. iii. sect. 3, cap. iv. pag. 108,) saith, faith dependeth upon two principles, which must necessarily be foreknown, that a thing may be believed on one's authority, as Suarez rightly observeth, (Disp. ii.) 'De Fide,' (sect 4, 5, and Disp. iii. sect. 12, sect. 1.) One is, that the party doth speak this; the other is, that he is one worthy to be believed. Mark, he saith these two must be fore-known, and not fore-believed. Though I know what he and others say, to make it both the *objectum formale et materiale* in several respects; but that can be but secondarily, as I said. As for their similitude from the sun, which reveals itself and other things; besides that objects of sense and reason much differ in this, and similitudes prove nothing; in a sound sense, I grant the thing inferred by it: to wit, that Scripture revealeth particular truths to belief by way of divine testimony or affirmation; but it revealeth itself to be God's testimony, first, to knowledge, by its own characters or excellencies, seconded by the external testimony of miracles; and then, 2. By testification to belief. Learned Hooker, 'Eccles. Polit.' (lib. ii. and iii.) hath showed, that it is not first to be believed that Scripture is God's word, but to be proved by reason, which he affirmeth is not very difficult demonstratively to do. I dare stay no longer on this, (referring the more exact discussion to some fitter place;) only, if Scriptures cannot be proved to be God's word by reason, 1. Why do all our divines, in their common places, bring reasons to prove it? 2. How will they deal with pagans and enemies? Object. But they still tell you, the Spirit is only sufficient, when all reasons

are brought. *Answ.* That is to remove the question; or, when the question is of the objective sufficiency, they answer, of the efficient, rectifying and elevating the faculty. 2. Who knows not that a man may believe or know the Scripture to be God's word, without any more than a common help of the Spirit? The devils and damned believe, or know it, and so doth many an ungodly man here; but a saving knowledge or belief doth indeed require a special grace of the Spirit.

In a word, if reason were of no more use here than some make it, as it were in vain to preach or write in this point for Christianity, so it would follow, that he that is drunk or mad, or an infant, if not a brute, were the fittest to make a Christian, which is so vile an imagination, that I dare say he that hath the best and rightest reason, and by consideration makes the most use of it, is the best Christian, and doth God best service; and that all sin is on the contrary, for want of right reason, and the using of it by consideration. But methinks I should not need to plead for reason, till beasts can speak and plead against me! but, yet, I must tell you, if you heard the accusation, you would excuse my apology.

If none but the ignorant be an enemy to knowledge, sure none but the unreasonable is an enemy to reason.

6. But the greatest offence of all is, that I lay so much upon human testimony and tradition, which some think uncertain: some think that it would make our faith too human, and some think it is too like the papist's arguings.

To all which I answer, 1. See whether the best of our divines do not the like. I will name some of the choicest that ever the reformed church enjoyed. Rob. Baronius saith, '*Apol. con. Turnebul.*' (Tract. ii. punct. 2, p. 686:) 'The testification of the present church is a condition necessarily requisite for our believing the Scripture authority, because faith comes by hearing. 2. From the consent of all the present church, or all Christians now living, the chiefest argument may be drawn to prove the authority of any canonical book. 3. From the perpetual and universal tradition and practice of the whole church from the apostles' time to ours, we may have a human persuasion, and that certain and infallible, of the divine and canonical authority of those books which were still undoubted, or which some call the protocanonical. Doctor Whitaker saith it belongs to the church: 1. To be a witness and keeper of the Scriptures; 2. To judge and discern between Scriptures which are true and

genuine, and which are false, suppositious, and apocryphal; 3. To divulge them; 4. To expound them. ‘De Sac. Script.’ (quæst. iii. cont. I, c. ii. p. 203, 204;) and in his ‘Duplicat. Advers. Stapleton,’ more fully, (p. 47.) Which of us knows not the necessity of the ministers of the church; and that it is safely and wisely appointed of God? so that to condemn the ministry and testimony of the church, is nothing else but to err from the faith, and rush into most certain destruction. See more, (p. 15, 58, 59, &c., 364, 60, 62, 69, 77, 78, 438, 119, 328.) Davenant alloweth of historical tradition, ‘De Judice Controv.’ (p. 11, sect. 3, 24, 27, 30, 31, 32.) The like might be showed out of Camer., Cham., Ames., and divers¹ others, but that I must not enlarge.

2. I would have the contrary-minded tell me how they know, without human testimony or tradition, that these are the same books which the prophets and apostles wrote; and wholly the same: that they are not depraved and wilfully corrupted: that these are all: how know you that one of the Books of Esther is canonical and the other apocryphal? Where is the man that ever knew the canon from the apocryphal before it was told him, and without tradition? I confess, for my own part, I could never boast of any such testimony, or light of the Spirit, nor reason neither, which without human testimony or tradition would have made me believe] that the Book of Canticles is canonical, and written by Solomon, and the Book of Wisdom apocryphal, and written by Philo, as some think; or that Paul’s Epistle to the Laodiceans, which you may see in Bruno in ‘Epist.,’ Sixtus Senensis, and others, is apocryphal, and the second and third Epistles of John canonical. Nor could I have known all or any historical books, such as Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, &c. to be written by divine inspiration, but by tradition; nor could I know all or any of those books to be God’s word, which contain mere positive constitutions, as Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, &c., were it not for the same tradition; nor could I know that any of those books were written by divine inspiration, which contain, besides

¹ Chemnitius examen Concil. Trident, par. i. p. (mihi) 109—111, &c., is so full, that, in his eight sorts of tradition, he not only saith much more than I here do, but in some of them satisfieth Andradius himself. Vide Andrad. Defens. Concil. Trident. lib. ii. p. (mihi) 217, usque ad 230. Nemo ex scriptoribus ecclesiasticis qui continuata temporum successione ab apostolis huc usque vixerunt usquam in scriptis suis in memoriam redigere eos dignatus est. — *Euseb. Hist. Eccles.* lib. iii. cap. 19. loquens de libris Apocryph.

such history and positives, nothing but the truths which are known by the light of nature, without further supernatural revelation, if it had not been for tradition; nor could I have known those books to be written by divine inspiration, which speak of mere supernatural things, (either historical, as Christ's incarnation, resurrection, &c., or doctrinal,) had not tradition or human testimony assured me that these are the books which those holy men wrote, and that such undoubted, uncontrolled miracles were wrought for the confirmation of their doctrine. Further, I would know, How doth an illiterate man know but by human testimony: 1. Whether it be indeed a Bible that the minister reads? 2. Or when he reads true, and when false; and whether any of those words be in the Bible which men say are in it? 3. Or that it is truly translated out of the Hebrew and Greek? 4. Or that it was originally written in those languages? 5. Or that copies were authentic out of which they were translated? 6. Or how will they know many Jewish customs, or points in chronology, geography, &c., without which some scripture can never be understood? 7. Or how do the most learned critics know the true signification of any one word of the Hebrew or Greek in Scripture, or any other book, yea, Latin or English, or any language, but only by tradition and human faith?

Yea, there is no doubt but in some cases tradition may save without any Scripture: for, 1. Men were saved, from Adam to Moses, without Scripture that we know of: and, as Dr. Usher well observeth, one reason why they might be without it, was the facility and certainty of knowing by tradition; for Methuselah lived many hundred years with Adam, and Shem lived longer with Methuselah, and Isaac lived fifty years with Shem; so that three men saw from the beginning of the world till Isaac's fiftieth year.^m 2. And thousands were converted and saved by the doctrine of the apostles and primitive preachers, before it was committed to writing: so many Jews in the captivity had not the Scripture. 3. And if any among the Abassines, Armenians, or ignorant papists, do believe in Christ upon mere tradition, (no doubt they may,) who can question their salvation? for Christ saith, that "whosoever believeth in him shall not perish," which way soever he was brought to believe. Will you hear Irenæus in this, who lived before popery was born? "*Quid enim et si quibus de aliqua modica quæstione disceptatio esset?*"

^m Vide Euseb. Nireimberg. de Orig. Scripturæ, præcipue, lib. 1—3.

Nonne oporteret in antiquissimas recurrere ecclesias?" (Mark, he saith not 'ad ecclesiam Romanam, vel ad unum principem.')

"In quibus apostoli conversati sunt, et ab eis de præsentī quæstione sumere quod certum et re liquidum est? Quid autem si neque apostoli quidem scripturas reliquissent nobis; nonne oportebat ordinem sequi traditionis, quam tradiderunt iis quibus committebant ecclesias? Cui ordinationi assentiunt multæ gentes barbarorum eorum qui in Christum credunt, sine caractere vel atramento scriptam habentes per Spiritum in cordibus suis salutem, et veterem traditionem diligenter custodientes, &c. Hanc fidem qui sine literis crediderunt, quantum ad sermonem nostrum barbari sunt; quantum autem ad sententiam et consuetudinem et conversationem, propter fidem per quam sapientissimi sunt, et placent Deo, &c. Sic per illam veterem apostolorum traditionem, ne in conceptionem quidem mentis admittunt quodcunque (hæreticorum) portentiloquium est." ('Adv. Hæres.' lib. 3. c. 4.)

As for those that think it favours the papists to argue thus for tradition, they are quite mistaken, as I have showed afterwards. The papists build on the authority of the church's decisive judgment; but I use only the church's testimony. The papists, by the church, mean, 1. The present church; 2. Only their own Romish church; 3. And in that only the pope, or council, as infallible judge. But I mean, 1. The universal church through the world; 2. Especially the ancient church next to the apostles; 3. And therein the godly writers and Christians generally. The papists ground all on the church only, and think that we must first know the true church, who is the judge, before we can know the Scripture. But I value, in some cases more, the testimony of heathens, Jews, and all heretics,ⁿ an enemy's testimony being most valid against himself: and I use not their testimony only, as they are of the church, or as Christians, but also as men endued with sense and reason, and the common remnants of moral honesty. In one word, the papists receive the Scriptures on the authoritative, infallible judgment of their own church, that is, the pope: and I receive it as God's perfect law, delivered down from hand to hand to this present age, and know it to be the same book which was wrote by the prophets and apostles, by an infallible testimony of

ⁿ Origen against Celsus gives you many. Vide lib. 8. et Aug. 'de Civit. Dei,' lib. 12.: et testimonium Porphyrii 'in Cyril.' lib. 10: 'contra Julian.' et Hieronym. 'adver. lib. Vigilant.' Plura vide in 'Annot. Grot. in lib. de Verit. Religionis' præcipue, in lib. 3.

rational men, friends, and foes, in all ages. And for them that think that this lays all our faith on uncertainties, I answer, 1. Let them give us more certain grounds. 2. We have an undoubted, infallible certainty of the truth of this tradition, as I have after showed. He is mad that doubts of the certainty of William the Conqueror's reigning in England, because he hath but human testimony. We are certain that the statutes of this land were made by the same parliaments and kings that are mentioned to be the authors; and that those statutes which we have now in our books are the same which they made; for there were many copies dispersed. Men's lands and estates were still held by them. There were multitudes of lawyers and judges, whose calling lay in the continual use of them; and no one lawyer could corrupt them, but his antagonist would soon tell him of it, and a thousand would find it out. So that I do not think any man doubteth of the certainty of these acts being the same they pretend to be. And in our case about the Scripture, we have much more certainty, as I have showed. These copies were dispersed all over the world, so that a combination to corrupt them in secret was impossible. Men judged their hopes of salvation to lie in them, and therefore would sure be careful to keep them from corruption, and to see that no other hand should do it. There were thousands of ministers, whose office and daily work it was to preach those Scriptures to the world, and therefore they must needs look to the preserving of them; and God was pleased to suffer such abundance of heretics to arise, perhaps of purpose for this end, among others, that no one could corrupt the Scriptures, but all his adversaries would soon have catched him in it: for all parties, of each opinion, still pleaded the same Scriptures against all the rest, even as lawyers plead the law of the land at the bar against their adversaries. So that it is impossible that in any main matter it should be depraved. What it may be in a letter or a word, by the negligence of transcribers, is of no great moment.

Indeed, the popish doctrine of traditions, such as you may find in 'Richworth's Dialogues,' leads directly to heathenism, and builds all our Christianity on such certain uncertainties, yea, palpable untruths, that it is a wonder that they who believe them renounce not their Christianity.

But the great objection is, that by arguing thus, our faith is finally resolved into human testimony, and so is but a human faith.

Ans. If I said that those that make this objection, show that they know not what faith is, nor what the resolving of it is which they mention, I should not wrong them ; but because I would give them a satisfactory account of my belief in this great point, I will more particularly answer the several questions which use to be here raised.

Quest. Why do you believe the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Christ, with all the rest of the articles or doctrines of your faith ?

Ans. Because they are the word of God, or God hath testified or reported them, or hath revealed them to the world as true ; so that I have no higher or further reason to believe them to be true, but only this, God hath spoken them.

Quest. How know you that God hath revealed or testified these things ?

Ans. There are many questions comprehended in this one, or else it is very ambiguous. In regard of the object, it is one thing to ask how I know it to be revealed ; and another, how I know it is God that revealed it ? In regard of the act, the words "How know you?" are doubtful. You may either mean, in your inquiry, by what principal, efficient cause, or by what nearest efficient, or by what means or convincing arguments, or by what naturally requisite means, or by what instrument ? all these must not be confounded.

Quest. How know you (that is, by what moving reasons) that these things are revealed ?

Ans. I need not arguments ; my senses of seeing and hearing tell me.

Quest. But how did the prophets and apostles know that they were revealed to them ?

Ans. Some by internal sense, who had it by inspiration, and some by external sense, who heard it from God, or Christ, or angels, or read the tablet which he wrote.

Quest. How did the other believers in those times know that these things were revealed to the prophets or apostles ?

Ans. By their own testimony.

Quest. How knew they that their testimony was true ?

Ans. I have answered this at large in the fourth chapter, and third section. If it had not been revealed to them, they could not have revealed it to others.

Quest. But how do we in these times know that these things were revealed to the apostles ?

Ans. Some few parts of the world knew it only by unwritten tradition; but most of the churches know it by the Scripture which those holy men wrote, containing those doctrines.

Quest. But how know you that these Scriptures were written by them?

Ans. By infallible tradition.^o

Quest. But how know you that they be not, in the substance, corrupted since?

Ans. By the same infallible tradition assuring my reason of it, even as I know that the statutes of the land were made by those kings in parliaments whose names they bear; and as I know that the works of Aristotle, Cicero, Virgil, Ovid, &c., were made by them, and are not, in the substance, corrupted; yea, far greater certainty doth tradition afford us.

Quest. But though you are thus assured of the revelation, yet how know you it is divine, or that it was God, indeed, that did reveal it?

Ans. You must know, as presupposed, that themselves affirm that God revealeth this to them, both by their speech to those that heard them preach, and by this Scripture which affirms itself to be of divine inspiration.

Quest. But how did they know themselves that they were not mistaken?

Ans. 1. Those whom God inspired, or to whom he spake, knew certainly, by an inexpressible sense, that it was God himself, and no delusion. God never speaks so extraordinarily, but by the same act he both makes known the thing revealed, and himself to be the speaker. 2. Besides, they were fully certain it was no delusion, by the frequent, uncontrolled miracles which Christ did, and which he enabled them to do themselves. See more, chap. iv. sect. 3., where this is more fully answered.

Quest. But how shall we know that they delude us not, and that the Scripture saith true in affirming itself to be of divine inspiration; for we must not believe every person or book that so affirmeth?

Ans. I have answered this in the before-cited chapter and section.

To which I add: 1. There are such characters^p of verity and

^o See Chemnit. Exam. Concil. Trident. part i. p. (mihi) 113, out of Origen, Eusebius, and Austin, showing the use of this sort of tradition.

^p Vide Greg. de Valent. Analys. Fid. lib. 1. c. 25.

majesty in the Scriptures themselves, that may very strongly persuade us of the verity of them, at least as being exceeding probable. Especially the exceeding spirituality and purity of them, and the high, strange design of God manifested about the way of advancing his glory and saving mankind; which design, in all the parts of its excellency concatenated, was not laid open by one person only, nor in one only age; but was in doing many hundred years, and opened by many several persons at that distance, so that it is impossible that they should lay their heads together to contrive it. Also,¹ the fulfilled prophecies show its verity. And if any one part have not these characters so evident on it, yet it is certain, because it is attested by the rest, or some of them, that have them. 2. But that which fully persuades me, being thus prepared by the quality of the writings, is the many apparent uncontrolled miracles^a which the apostles themselves did work, who wrote those books. God would not have enabled them to confirm a false, deluding testimony, and that of such a moment, by miracles, and such miracles. 3. And when I have once thus believed, I am much confirmed, both by the experience I have of the power and sweet relish of the doctrine of the Scriptures on my own soul, and the efficacy of it on the souls of others; and also in that I find all the rational causes of doubting of the truth of Scripture to be removed.

Quest. But when you make miracles your great argument, how know you that those miracles were indeed wrought?

Ans. By infallible tradition, partly by the instrumentality of Scripture, and partly by other writings, and universal confession: as I know that Julius Cæsar conquered Pompey, and William the Norman won England.

Quest. But did you at first believe the Scripture on these grounds? Or can it be expected that unlearned people should understand the certainty of this tradition?

Ans. 1. I first believed that the Scripture was God's word, merely upon the common, uncontradicted affirmation of my teachers; and so do most others that I meet with: and so proceed to see the more certain arguments afterwards. 2. Yet if they were wisely and diligently taught them, the unlearned are capable of knowing the infallible certainty of that tradition; yea, and the certainty of the truth of the translation in the substance;

^a Phlegon in lib. 13. of his Annals, confesseth the miracles done by Peter, as Origen saith, lib. 2, contra Celsum.

and that you do read truly the Scripture to them, &c. For there is a human testimony which is certain ; and so a human faith ; yea, more certain than my own sense. Sense hath always greater evidence than belief ; but not so great certainty sometimes. I will rather believe ten thousand sober, impartial witnesses, that say, they see or hear such a thing, having no considerable contradiction, than I would believe mine own eyes or ears for the contrary.

Quest. But is that faith divine and saving, when men take the Scripture for God's word merely on report, or other weak arguments ?

Answ. It is a faith that lies open to great danger by temptation, when the weakness of the grounds shall appear ; and will have much weakness in the mean time : but yet it may be divine and saving. For still this man's faith is resolved into God's veracity or authority. Though on weak grounds he take the Scripture to be revealed by God, yet he believes it to be true only because God spoke or revealed it. So that the error not lying in the formal or material object of faith, but only in the arguments persuading that it is from God, this destroys not the soundness and truth of the belief.

Object. But how know we that the miracles were wrought to confirm the truth of these books ?

Answ. They were wrought to confirm the testimony of the men, whether delivered by word or writing. And this by writing is that part of their testimony which the church now enjoyeth.

Object. But all that wrote the Scripture did not work miracles.

Answ. Their testimony is confirmed by those that did.

Quest. Into what, then, do you ultimately resolve your faith ?

Answ. If you understand the phrase of "resolving faith" strictly and properly, so it is resolved only into the credit or veracity of the speaker, as being the cause of the verity of the proposition which I believe, even the principal, efficient cause ; the knowledge of whose infallible verity doth, above all, and only in that kind, cause me to believe the things revealed to be true.

But if you take the phrase of "resolving faith" in the largest sense, as it containeth not only its resolution into its formal object, but into all its causes in their several kinds, so it is resolved thus : 1. As I have said, I resolve my faith into the prime truth, that is, into God's infallible veracity, as the only

formal object, or full, proper, efficient of the verity of propositions believed, and the principal reason of my belief. 2. I resolve my belief into God's revelation or testimony, as the *principium patefactionis*, or the naturally necessary means of application of the former, which is the *principium certitudinis* (it is Rob. Baronius's own distinction. ('Apodix. Tract.' iii. c. 6. p. 123.) Yet I am forced to dissent from Baronius, in that he makes this revelation to be part of the formal object, though the veracity of God revealing, and not the truth of God without revelation, be the formal object of belief. Yet I conceive the said revelation to be no part of the formal object, but a natural means of the production of the material object by the formal object which is its efficient; and that not directly of the immediate material object, but of the remote only: for the immediate material object is the truth of propositions, and the remote is the proposition which is true. Now, the revelation is directly a production of the proposition, as such; but not of the verity of it directly. We, therefore, believe it to be true, because the true God spoke it; though, in a second place, the patefaction may be said to produce the verity of the thing.

3. I resolve my belief into the characters of divinity which are found in Scripture, and into the uncontrolled miracles by which it was attested, as the principal motive conjunct, by which I am persuaded that it was God, and no other, that was the author or revealer. 4. I resolve my belief into human testimony, or infallible tradition, rationally, not authoritatively infallible, as the means of discovering to me the matters of fact, viz., that the apostles did write: that this delivered to me is the writing; that it is all; that such miracles were wrought; that the Scriptures are not depraved in any material points, or out of design; which books are canonical, and which not. Had I been the person to whom God from heaven, or Christ on earth, did reveal these truths immediately, then this resolution of my faith should be into my senses (made use of rationally); I should have known, by external sense, what Christ spoke, and what not; what miracles he did; and, by internal sense, that it was God, and no other, that inspired me; and, by both, that it was Christ, and no other, that spake and wrought miracles. But seeing I live at so great a distance, and God revealed not these things to me immediately, but to the apostles, and they to others, and they to others, and so down to this day: therefore tradition

must do that for me which sense did to the first receivers ; as I say what sense did for them, that human testimony doth for us, or must carry it between their senses and our senses, and so to our reason. 5. I resolve my belief into all truths revealed in Scripture, as into the material object, if it were not too improper to call that a resolving of it into that which answers the *quid credis*, and not *cur credis*, or the *cui* ? 6. I resolve it into the books or writings, as the authentic instrument revealing God's mind : not into the words, as in this or that language, or as considered in themselves, but as considered in relation to the truths which they express, viz. as they are signifiers of all those enunciations which they contain. 7. I resolve my belief into reason or understanding, as the nearest vital, efficient cause. 8. I resolve it into the Holy Ghost's illumination or grace, as into the remote efficient, enabling and causing me to believe sincerely and savingly, but not into any internal testimony of the Spirit, as the object of my faith.

I know our Baronius opposeth Spalatensis for one of the points which I here assert, 'Apol. Tract.' ix. punct. 4, 5, p. 711—714, &c. Were it not that I have been too tedious already, I would answer those arguments of Baronius, which is very easy to do ; but to the unprejudiced and considerate I think it will seem needless, or, at least, is fitter for another discourse.

And thus having catechised myself to give men an account of my belief, and help those that are weaker herein, I shall conclude all with two or three words of advice to the reader.

1. Beware that you exclude not, in your arguing, any cause or necessary medium of your faith, by quarrelling too eagerly with other men's grounds : many men run upon this dangerous rock. Lest they should give too much to reason, or to tradition, or the church, or miracles, some further exclude them than will stand with the rationality, and safety, and honour of Christianity. Set not those things in opposition which may and must consist in co-ordination, or subordination to others.

The removal of one necessary cause may destroy the effect ; or of one pillar, may pull down the house ; or of one of the necessary parts, may kill the man ; though all the rest be let alone, or more regarded than before. It is no whit derogatory to the law of the land, to say, I must read it with my eyes, and by the help of spectacles, and must receive it with my hands or ears, from a herald or other proclaimer, &c.

2. Take heed of denying the perfection of Scripture in deed, while you maintain it in words. Two sorts I would warn of this.

1. Those that plead for traditional doctrines.^r To these I have spoken elsewhere: 'Appendix to Treatise of Baptism.'

2. Those that are so eager as to tie all men to their expositions of Scripture, and censure all for heretical that differ from them therein. When we have disputed and contended ourselves a-weary, and wrangled the church into flames and ashes, yet that which God hath spoken obscurely, and so left difficult in itself, will remain obscure and difficult still;^s and that which is difficult through the weakness and incapacity of unlearned men, will be far better cleared by a rational explication than by a bare

^r Unde ista traditio? utrumne de dominica et evangelica autoritate descendens? An de apostolorum mandatis atque epistolis veniens? Ea enim facienda esse quæ scripta sunt Deus testatur ad Joshuam; non recedat liber legis ex ore tuo, &c. Si ergo aut evangelio præcipitur, aut in apostolorum epistolis aut actibus continetur, observetur divina hæc et sancta traditio. Quæ ista obstinatio, quæve præsumptio, humanam traditionem divinæ dispositioni antepone? nec animadvertere indignari et irasci Deum, quoties divina præcepta solvit et præterit humana traditio? Mark vii. 8; 1 Tim. vi. 3. Consuetudo sine veritate, Vetustas erroris est; propter quod relicto errore sequamur veritatem.—*Cyprian. Epist. 74. ad Pomp.* pp. 229, 230. The same place of Cyprian is vindicated by Dr. Whitaker 'De Sac. Scrip.' cont. l. Q. 6. de 'Perfect. Scrip.' mentioned also by Goulartius on Cyprian, *ibid.*

^s Doctissimi Nazianzeni consilium ab omnibus Christianis audiendum, "Divina contemplare, verum in terminis maneto; loquere quæ sunt Spiritus; et si possibile est, nihil aliud. Ne patris naturam nimis curiose rimator, unigeniti essentiam, Spiritus gloriam, unam in tribus deitatem; utere verbis consuetis. Ratio pertineat ad sapientiores. Sufficiat tibi ut habeas fundamentum; super ædificent artifices." Utinam soli artifices super ædificent! Utinam superstructiones suas multas et pæne infinitas cum paucis et planis fundamentalibus pari affectu et honore suscipiendas non commiserent! Si hoc conentur, decet tamen pios et prudentes Christianos discernere, inter prima illa pauca credibilia a Christo et apostolis immediate revelata, et innumeras illas deductiones theologorum pro cujusque ingenio et opinione cum fundamentalibus in eundem locum contrusas.—*Davenant. Adhort. ad Pacem Eccles.* pp. 87, 88. It was sound counsel that Pomeranus gives the ministers of God's word, (ne tot articulis, &c.,) that they should not, with so many articles, and creeds, and confessions, confound the minds of plain Christians, but that they should draw up the sum of their belief into some few heads. Nothing hinders but that professors and licentiates in divinity may busy their thoughts, and spend their hours upon the knotty and abstruse questions of that sacred faculty; but why should the heads of ordinary Christians be troubled with those curious disquisitions?—*Dr. Hall's 'Peacemaker,'* sect. 16. pp. 118, 119. I pray read the rest of that small treatise, and his 'Pax Terris,' a smaller, but both worthy of all our serious studying. Read Usher's excellent Sermon on Ephes. iv. 13. before King James, June 20, 1624, throughout.

canon. O when will the Lord once persuade his churches to take his written word for the only canon of their faith ; and that in its own naked simplicity and evidence, without the determinations and canons of men, which are no parts of our creed, but helps to our understandings, and bounds to our practice in matters circumstantial, which God hath left to man's determination ! When will the Lord persuade us not to be wise above what is written ; but to acknowledge that which is unrevealed in the word, to be beyond us ; and that which is more darkly revealed, to be more doubtful to us ! Then the hot contentions of the church about the mysteries of God's decrees, and nature and order of his immanent acts ; the nature and way of the workings of the Spirit on the soul, &c. ; with a hundred quarrels about mere names and words, will be more lovingly and brotherly debated, without such alienation of affections and reproachful expressions.

Two things have set the church on fire, and been the plagues of it above one thousand years ; 1. Enlarging our creed, and making more fundamentals than ever God^t made.

2. Composing, and so imposing, our creeds and confessions in our own words and phrases.

When men have learned more manners and humility than to accuse God's language as too general and obscure, as if they could mend it, and have more dread of God, and compassion on themselves, than to make those to be fundamentals or certainties which God never made so ; and when they reduce their confessions, 1. To their due extent, and, 2. To scripture phrase, that dissenters may not scruple subscribing, then, and, I think, never till then, shall the church have peace about doctrinals.^u

^t Ausim confirmare, majorum tam veterum hæresium, quam præsentium, dissidiorum partem, in ecclesia hinc præcipue natam fuisse et esse, quod concilia, episcopi, doctores ecclesiæ, nullo discrimine, quævis scholarum dogmata, et cathedrarum placita pro articulis fidei catholicæ vindicarunt, parique ad salutem necessitate credenda conscientiis imposuerunt : ex quavis vero interpretationis Scripturarum discrepantia, nimis facile hæreses vel schismata fecerunt.—*Paræus in Iren.* p. (mihi) 19. Vide et pp. 14 et 15. All peace-making divines still harp upon this string, and yet some call it Socinian. If any man would see more of the evil of making points necessary which God made not so, you may throughout Conrad. Bergius's 'Prax. Cathol.' see enough ; and the words of very many divines, Lutherans and Calvinists, to that end.

^u Chillingworth, page last of the Preface. Shall men be judged Socinians for advancing the Scriptures as the only rule ? I pray read well what that excellent divine Dr. Stoughton hath written expressly and earnestly for what I

It seems to me no heinous Socinian motion which Chillingworth is blamed for, viz. Let all men believe the Scripture, and that only, and endeavour to believe it in the true sense, and promise this, and require no more of others ; and they shall find this not only a better, but the only means to suppress heresy, and restore unity, &c.

If you say men may subscribe to Scripture, and yet misinterpret it, I answer, so they may do by human canons. If you say, they may preach against fundamentals, or evident truths, while yet they subscribe the Scripture misunderstood, I answer, 1. All such weighty truths are delivered expressly, or very plainly. 2. I hope God will once not only bring into use ministerial power, but also teach magistrates to rule for Christ to the restraining of such as shall so palpably offend, as openly to contradict what they subscribe.

But that was the third and last word of advice I here intended : viz. That seeing the Scripture is the sacred, perfect law of the most high God, that man would use it reverently, and that magistrates would restrain men that would bring God's Word into contempt, under pretence of preaching it ; * that every ignorant fellow, whose tongue has caught a lax, may not run into the pulpit to ease himself ; nor any one have leave to disgorge himself in the holy assemblies, that hath got a surfeit of pride and self-conceit. Oh ! if you knew the weakness of poor people, and how apt they are to be deceived, you would not give deceivers liberty to do their worst ! You that will not give men leave to persuade your wives to adultery, your children to lewdness, your soldiers or subjects to rebellion or treachery, should surely be as regardful of men's souls, and the honour of Christ. And you that will not give every fool leave to go in your names on an embassy, who would but disgrace you, should not let men speak publicly, as in the name of Christ, that cannot speak sense, to the shame of our profession ; nor should men turn preachers, as the river *Nilus* breeds frogs, saith

now urge, in his form of wholesome words, about forming church confessions.

* *Ordinationes eorum temerariæ, leves, inconstantes : nunc neophytos collocant, nunc seculo obstrictos nunc apostatas nostros, ut gloria eos obligent, quia veritate non possunt. Nusquam facilius proficitur quam in castris rebellium, ubi ipsum esse illic, promereri est ; itaque alius hodie episcopus, cras alius ; hodie diaconus, qui cras lector ; hodie presbyter, qui cras laicus ; nam et laici sacerdotalia munera injungunt.*—*Tertul., de Præscript. advers. Hæres. c. 41.*

Herodotus, when one half moveth before the other is made, and while it is yet but plain mud.

But I must make this preface no longer. I pray observe that in the margin, and see whether our times be not like Tertullian's.

Reader, as thou lovest thy comforts, thy faith, thy hope, thy safety, thy innocency, thy soul, thy Christ, thine everlasting rest ; love, reverence, read, study, obey, and stick close to the Scripture. Farewell.

April 2, 1652.

THE
SAINT'S EVERLASTING REST.

THE SECOND PART.

CHAP. I.

SECT. 1. We are next to proceed to the confirmation of this truth, which, though it may seem needless in regard of its own clearness and certainty, yet in regard of our distance and infidelity nothing more necessary : but, you will say, to whom will this endeavour be useful ? They who believe the Scriptures are convinced already ; and for those who believe it not, how will you convince them ? Answ. But sad experience tells, that those that believe, do believe but in part, and, therefore, have need of further confirmation ; and, doubtless, God hath left us arguments sufficient to convince unbelievers themselves, or else how should we preach to pagans ; or what should we say to the greatest part of the world, that acknowledge not the Scriptures ? Doubtless the Gospel should be preached to them ; and though we have not the gift of miracles to convince them of the truth, as the apostles had, yet we have arguments demonstrative and clear, or else our preaching would be in vain ; we having nothing left but bare affirmations.

Though I have all along confirmed sufficiently by testimony of Scripture what I have said, yet I will here briefly add thus much more, that the Scripture doth clearly assert this truth in these six ways.

1. It affirms, that this rest is fore-ordained for the saints, and the saints also fore-ordained to it. "God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city." (Heb. xi. 16.) "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor heart conceived, what God hath prepared for them that love him." (1 Cor. ii. 9.) Which I conceive must be meant of these preparations in heaven ; for those on earth are both seen and conceived, or else how are they enjoyed ? To sit on Christ's right and left

hand in his kingdom, shall be given to them for whom it is prepared. (Matt. xx. 23.) And themselves are called "vessels of mercy, before prepared unto glory." (Rom. ix. 23.) And in Christ we have obtained the inheritance, "being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." (Eph. i. 11.) "And whom he thus predestinateth, them he glorifieth;" (Rom. viii. 30;) "For he hath, from the beginning, chosen them to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth." (2 Thess. ii. 13.)

And though the intentions of the unwise and weak may be frustrated, and "without counsel purposes are disappointed," (Prov. xv. 22,) "yet the thoughts of the Lord shall surely come to pass; and as he hath purposed, it shall stand. The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations;" (Isa. xiv. 24;) therefore, "blessed are they whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance." (Psal. xxxiii. 11, 12.) Who can bereave his people of that rest which is designed them by God's eternal purpose?

Sect. II. Secondly: The Scripture tells us that this rest is purchased, as well as purposed for them; or that they are redeemed to this rest. In what sense this may be said to be purchased by Christ, I have showed before, viz., not as the immediate work of his sufferings, which was the immediate payment of our debt, by satisfying the law, but as a more remote, though most excellent fruit; even the effect of that power, which by death he procured to himself. He himself, for the suffering of death,^a was crowned with glory, yet did he not properly die for himself, nor was that the direct effect of his death. Some of those teachers who are gone forth of late, do tell us, as a piece of their new discoveries, that Christ never purchased life and salvation for us, but purchased us to life and salvation:^b not understanding that they affirm and deny the same thing in several expressions. What difference is there betwixt buying liberty to the prisoner, and buying the prisoner to liberty? Betwixt buying life to a condemned malefactor, and buying him to life; or betwixt purchasing reconciliation to an enemy, and purchasing an enemy to reconciliation? but in this last they have

^a Paul Hobson.

^b I confess the latter is the more proper expression, and oftener used in the Scriptures.

found a difference, and tell us that God never was at enmity with man, but man at enmity with God, and therefore need not be reconciled : directly contrary to Scripture, which tells us that God hateth all the workers of iniquity, and that he is their enemy : (Exod. xxiii. 22 ; Psal. xi. 5, and v. 5 ; Isa. lxiii. 10 ; Lament. ii. 5 :) and though there be no change in God, nor any thing properly called hatred, yet it sufficeth that there is a change in the sinner's relation, and that there is something in God which cannot better be expressed or conceived than by these terms of enmity : and the enmity of the law against a sinner, may well be called the enmity of God. However, this differenceth betwixt enmity in God, and enmity in us ; but not betwixt the sense of the fore-mentioned expressions : so that whether you will call it purchasing life for us, or purchasing us to life, the sense is the same, viz., by satisfying the law, and removing impediments, to procure us the title and possession of this life.^c

It is, then, by the "blood of Jesus that we have entrance into the holiest." (Heb. x. 19.) Even all our entrance to the fruition of God, both that by faith and prayer here, and that by full possession hereafter. Therefore do the saints sing forth his praises, "who hath redeemed them out of every nation by his blood, and made them kings and priests to God." (Rev. v. 10.)

Whether that εἰς ἀπολύτρωσιν τῆς περιποιήσεως, in Eph. i. 14, which is translated "the redemption of the purchased possession," do prove this or not ; yet I see no appearance of truth in their exposition of it, who, because they deny that salvation is purchased by Christ, do affirm that it is Christ himself who is there called the purchased possession.^d Therefore did God give his Son, and the Son give his life, and therefore was Christ lifted up on the cross, "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John iii. 15, 16.) So, then, I conclude

^c The phrases are used from the effect to the affection, as we say, i. e. God doth that to men, as enemies do ; and even to the elect before conversion, he stands, as we may say, engaged by his laws as a just judge, to do that which enemies do, and thence is said to be their enemy, though his decree is to deal in mercy with them. Else, speaking of enmity properly, I say as Clemens Alexandrinus doth of God : viz., we say that God is an enemy to no man, for he is the Creator of all ; and there is nothing comes to pass but what he will : but we say that those are enemies to him that do not obey him, and walk not by his precepts, for they bear an enmity to his testament.—*Clemens Alexandrinus, Stromat. lib. 4.*

^d Paul Hobson.

either Christ must lose his blood and sufferings, and “never see the travail of his soul,” (Isa. liii. 11,) but all his pains and expectation be frustrated, or else there remaineth a rest to the people of God.

Sect. III. Thirdly: And as this rest is purchased for us, so is it also promised to us; as the firmament with the stars, so are the sacred pages bespangled with the frequent intermixture of these divine engagements. Christ hath told us that “it is his will, that those who are given to him should be where he is, that they may behold the glory which is given him of the Father:” (John xvii. 24:) so also, “Fear not, little flock; it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom;” (Luke xii. 32;) *q. d.* fear not all your enemy’s rage, fear not all your own unworthiness, doubt not of the certainty of the gift; for it is grounded upon the good pleasure of your Father. “I appoint to you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me a kingdom, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom.” (Luke xxii. 29.) But because I will not be tedious in the needless confirming of an acknowledged truth, I refer you to the places here cited: 2 Thess. i. 7; Heb. iv. 1, 3; Matt. xxv. 34, and xiii. 43; 2 Tim. iv. 18; James ii. 5; 2 Pet. i. 11; 2 Thess. i. 5; Acts xiv. 22; Luke vi. 20, and xiii. 28, 29; 1 Thess. ii. 12; Matt. v. 12; Mark x. 21, and xii. 25; 1 Pet. i. 4; Heb. x. 34, and xii. 23; Colos. i. 5; Phil. iii. 20; Heb. xi. 16; Eph. i. 20; 1 Cor. xv. 7, 11, 17, &c.

Sect. IV. Fourthly: All the means of grace, and all the workings of the Spirit upon the soul, and all the gracious actions of the saints, are so many evident mediums to prove that there remaineth a rest to the people of God. If it be an undeniable maxim that God and nature do nothing in vain, then it is as true of God and his grace. “All these means and motions imply some end to

* Intra nostrum rationalem spiritum est quædam viva imago divinæ sapientiæ: ad quam dum respicimus, movemur per quendam divinum impulsu, ad pulsandum, ad petenda, et quærenda ea quæ sunt perfectiō imaginem sive ipsam ad exemplaris conformitatem ducentia.—*Cusanus Exercitatus*. lib. 10. fol. (mili) 183. B. Yet I do not argue as some, that because the soul desireth, it must enjoy: for God fulfilleth but sound desires, which are his own exciting in us, which are limited desires. If a man desire to fly with wings, or to be as God, these desires God is not to fulfil. Of which read Camero Prælect. de Verbo Dei, cap. 7. p. (operum) fol. 455. Cum vitium creaturæ angelicæ (et humanæ) dicitur, quod non adhæret Deo, hinc aptissime declaratur, ejus naturæ ut Deo adhæreat convenire. Quam porro magna sit laus

which they tend, or else they cannot be called means, nor are they the motions of wisdom or reasons : and no lower end than this "rest" can be imagined. God would never have commanded his people to repent and believe, to fast and pray, to knock and seek, and that continually, to read and study, to confer and meditate, to strive and labour, to run and fight, and all this to no purpose. Nor would the Spirit of God work them to this, and create in them a supernatural power, and enable them and excite them to a constant performance, were it not for this end whereto it leads us. Nor could the saints reasonably attempt such employments, nor yet undergo so heavy sufferings, were it not for this desirable end. But whatsoever the folly of man might do, certainly divine wisdom cannot be guilty of setting to work such fruitless motions. Therefore, whatever I read of duty required, whenever I find the grace bestowed, I take it as so many promises of rest. The Spirit would never kindle in us such strong desires after heaven, nor such a love to Jesus Christ, if we should not receive that which we desire and love. He that sets our feet in the way of peace will, undoubtedly, bring us to the end of peace. (Luke i. 27.) How nearly are the means and end conjoined ! (Matt. xi. 12.) "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force;" or, (as Luke xv. 16,) every man presseth into it : so that the violent apprehends the kingdom.^f Those whom he causeth to follow him in the regeneration, he will surely provide them thrones of judgment. (Matt. xix. 28.)

Sect.V. Fifthly : Scripture further assures us that the saints have the beginnings, foretastes, earnest, and seals of this rest here ; and may not all this assure them of the full possession ? The very kingdom of God is within them.^g (Luke xvii. 21.) They here,

adhærere Deo, ut ei vivat, inde sapiat, illo gaudeat, tantoque bono sine morte, sine errore, sine molestia perfruatur, quis cogitare digne possit, aut eloqui ?—August. de Civ. lib. 12. cap. 10.

^f Mr. Burroughs thinks this is meant of the violence of persecution, but Luke's phrase confuteth that : the sense is, that the door being now set open, he that will crowd in first, doth get possession ; as the crowd, or common people did, while the rulers that pretended to the chief title, stood without the doors, or by unbelief refused to enter.

^g *Atqui si lumen ipsum Dei illud verum, quod est in persona Christi, vitam in se continet, eaque vita cum lumine, quæ committitur in carnem, peritura est, in quam vita committitur : plane sic perituris et ipse Thesaurus : perituris enim peritura creduntur, sicut veteribus utribus novum vinum.—Vita Jesu manifestatur : Ubi ? In corpore nostro : in quo ? In mortali. Ergo in carne plane mortali secundum culpam, sed et vitali secundum gratiam.*

as is before said, take it by force, they have a beginning of that knowledge which Christ hath said is eternal life. (John xvii. 3.) I have fully manifested that before, that the rest and glory of the people of God doth consist in their knowing, loving, rejoicing, and praising; and all these are begun, though but begun here: therefore, doubtless, so much as we here know of God, so much as we love, rejoice, and praise, so much we have of heaven on earth, so much we enjoy of the rest of souls. And do you think that God will give the beginning where he never intends to give the end? Nay, God doth give his people oftentimes such foresights and foretastes of this same rest, that their spirits are even transported with it, and they could heartily wish they might be present there. Paul is taken up into the third heaven, and seeth things that must not be uttered. The saints are kept by the power of God through faith unto that salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time, wherein they can greatly rejoice, even in temptations: (1 Pet. i. 5, 6;) and therefore the apostle also tells us, that they who now see not Christ, nor ever saw him, yet love him, and believing do rejoice in him with joy unspeakable and full of glory; receiving the end of their faith, the salvation of their souls. (1 Pet. i. 8, 9.) Observe here, first, how God gives his people this foretasting joy: secondly, how this joy is said to be full of glory, and therefore must needs be a beginning of the glory: thirdly, how immediately upon this there follows "receiving the end of their faith, the salvation of the soul." And Paul also brings in the justified "rejoicing in hope of the glory of God." (Rom. v. 2.) And I doubt not, but as some poor Christians among us, who have little to boast of appearing without, have often these foretastes in their souls. And do you think that God will tantalize his people? Will he give them the first-fruits and not the crop? Doth he show them glory to set them longing, and then deny the actual fruition? Or doth he lift them up so near this rest, and give them such rejoicings in it, and yet never bestow it on them? It cannot be. Nay, doth he give them the "earnest of the inheritance;" (Eph. i. 14;) and "seal them with the Holy Spirit of promise;" (Eph. i. 13;) and yet will he deny

Vide quantum et illa vita Christi manifestetur. In re ergo aliena salutis, sed in substantia perpetua dissolutionis manifestabitur vita Christi æterna, jugis, incorrupta, jam Dei vita? aut cujus temporis vita Domini manifestabitur in corpore nostro?—*Tertul. de Anima*, c. 54. p. edit. Pamel. 419. 2 Cor. i. 22, and v. 5.

the full possession? These absurdities may not be charged on an ordinary man, much less on the faithful and righteous God.

Sect. VI. Sixthly, and lastly: The Scripture mentioneth particularly and by name, those who entered into this rest, as Enoch, who was taken up to God. So Abraham, Lazarus, and the thief that was crucified with Christ, &c. And if there be a rest for these, surely there is a rest for all believers. But it is vain to heap up scripture-proof, seeing it is the very end of the Scripture, to be a guide to lead us to this blessed state, and to discover it to us, and persuade us to seek it in the prescribed way, and to acquaint us with the hinderances that would keep us from it, and to be the charter and grant by which we hold all our title to it. So that our rest, and thereby God's glory, is, to the Scripture, as the end is to the way, which is frequently expressed and implied through the whole. There is no one that doubts of the certainty of this promised glory, but only they that doubt of the truth of the Scripture, or else know not what it containeth. And because I find the most temptations are resolved into this, and that there is so much unbelief even in true believers, and that the truth and strength of our belief of Scripture hath an exceeding great influence into all our graces, I shall briefly say something for your confirmation in this.

CHAP. II.

Motives to Study and Preach the Divine Authority of Scripture.

Sect. I. Thus^h much may suffice where the Scripture is believed, to confirm the truth of the point in hand, viz., the certain futurity of the saints' rest. And for pagans and infidels who believe not Scripture, it is besides the intention of this discourse

^h Sed quo plenius et impressius tam ipsum quam dispositiones ejus, et voluntates adiremus, instrumentum adjecit literaturæ, si quis velit de Deo inquirere, et inquisitum invenire, et invento credere, et credito deservire. Viros enim justitia et innocentia dignos Deum nosse et ostendere, a primordio in seculum emisit Spiritu Divino inundatos, quo prædicarent Deum unicum esse, qui universa condiderit, qui hominem de humo struxerit, &c., sed et observantibus præmia destinarit, qui producto ævo isto judicaturus sit suos cultores in vitæ æternæ retributionem, profanos in ignem æque perpetem et jugem, suscitatis omnibus ab initio defunctis, et reformatis et recensitis ad utriusque meriti dispunctionem.—*Tertul. Apol. c. 18.* operum edit. Pamel. p. 34.

to endeavour their conviction. I am endeavouring the consolation and edification of saints, and not the information and conversion of pagans. Yet do I acknowledge the subject exceeding necessary, even to the saints themselves : for Satan's assaults are oft made at the foundation ; and if he can persuade them to question the verity of Scripture, they will soon cast away their hopes of heaven.

But if I should here enter upon that task, to prove that Scripture to be the infallible word of God, I should make too broad a digression, and set upon a work as large as that, for the sake whereof I should undertake it ; neither am I insensible of how great a difficulty it would prove to manage it satisfactorily, and how much more than my ability is thereto requisite.

Yet, lest the tempted Christian should have no relief, nor any argument at hand against the temptation, I will here lay down some few, not intending it as a full resolution of that great question, but as a competent help to the weak, that have no time nor ability to read larger volumes. And I the rather am induced to it, because the success of all the rest that I have written depends upon this : no man will love, desire, study, labour for that which he believeth not to be attainable. And in such supernatural points, we must first apprehend the truth of the revelation, before we can well believe the truth of the thing revealed. And I desire the Lord to persuade the hearts of some of his choicest servants in these times, whom he hath best furnished for such a work, to undertake the complete handling of it ; to persuade them to which, I will here annex, first, some considerations, which also are the reasons of this brief attempt of my own, and may also serve to persuade all ministers to bestow a little more pains, in a seasonable grounding their hearers in this so great and needful a point, by a more frequent and clear discovery of the verity of the Scripture, though some, that know not what they say, may tell them that it is needless.¹

1. Of what exceeding great necessity is it to the salvation of ourselves and hearers, to be soundly persuaded of the truth of Scripture ! As God's own veracity is the prime foundation of our faith, from which particular axioms receive their verity, so the Scripture is the principal foundation *quoad patefactionem*,

¹ I have since written a supplement to this second part, called the 'Unreasonableness of Infidelity.'

revealing to us what is of God, without which revelation it is impossible to believe. And should not the foundation be both timely and soundly laid?

2. The learned divines of these latter times have, in most points of doctrine, done better than any, since the apostles, before them; and have much advantaged the church thereby, and advanced sacred knowledge. And should we not endeavour it in this point if possible above all, when yet the ancients were more frequent and full in it, for the most part, than we? I know there are many excellent treatises already extant on this subject, and such as I doubt not may convince gainsayers, and much strengthen the weak; but yet, doubtless, much more may be done for the clearing this weighty and needful point. Our great divines have said almost as much against papists in this, as need be said, especially Chamier, and our Robert Baronius, Whitaker, Reignoldus, &c. But is not most of their industry there bestowed, while they put off the atheist, the Jew, and other infidels, with a few pages or none? And so the great master-sin of infidelity in the souls of men, whereof the best Christians have too great a share, is much neglected, and the very greatest matter of all overlooked. Grotius, Morney, and Camero, above others, have done well; but if God would stir them up to this work, I doubt not but some, by the help of all foregoers, and especially improving antiquities, might do it more completely than any have yet done; which I think would be as acceptable a piece of service to the church as ever by human industry was performed.

3. And^k I fear the course that too many divines take this way, by resolving all into the testimony of the Spirit, in a mistaken sense, hath much wronged the Scripture and church of God, and much hardened pagans and atheists against the truth: I know that the illumination of the Spirit is necessary: a special illumination for the begetting of a special saving belief, and a common illumination for a common belief. But this is not so properly called the testimony of the Spirit; the use of this is to open our eyes to see that evidence of scripture verity which is already extant; and as to remove our blindness, so by farther

^k Of the difference of sense, vision, illumination, and revelation, vide Macarii Homil. 7. edit. Palthen, p. 99. Cognosci sine fide Scripturæ possunt, sive ex ecclesiæ testimonio, sive ex se noscantur. Ut liquido agnoscantur cum certa assensione animi, opus est Spiritus illuminatione.—*Whitaker rectissime Duplicat, adv. Stapleton, lib. 3, c. 8. pp. 535, 536.*

sanctifying, to remove our natural enmity to the truth, and prejudice against it, which is no small hinderance to the believing of it; for all the hinderance lieth not in the bare intellect.

But it is another kind of testimony than this, which many great divines resolve their faith into: for when the question is of the objective cause of faith, how know you Scripture to be the word of God; or why do you believe it so to be? They finally conclude, by the testimony of the Spirit: but the Spirit's illumination being only the efficient cause of our discerning, and the question being only of the objective cause or evidence, they must needs mean some testimony besides illuminating, sanctifying grace, or else not understand themselves: and, therefore, even great Chamier calleth this testimony 'the word of God,' and likens it to the revelations made to the prophets and apostles, dangerously, I think. (Tom. iii. lib. 13. c. 17.) To imagine a necessity, first, either of an internal proper testimony, which is *argumentum inartificiale*, as if the Spirit, as another person, spoke this truth within me, 'The Scripture is God's word;' or, secondly, of the Spirit's propounding that objective evidence internally in the soul, which is necessary to persuade by an artificial argument, without propounding it first *ab extra*; thirdly, or for the Spirit to infuse or create in a man's mind an actual persuasion that Scripture is God's word, the person not knowing how he is so persuaded, nor why; or of any the like immediate injection of the intelligible species; I say, to affirm that the Scriptures cannot be known to be God's word, without such a testimony of the Spirit as some of these, is, in my judgment, a justifying men in their infidelity, and a telling them that there is not yet extant any sufficient evidence of scripture truth, till the Spirit create it in ourselves, and, withal, to leave it impossible to produce any evidence for the conviction of an unbeliever, who cannot know the testimony of the Spirit in me: and, indeed, it is direct expectation of enthusiasm, and that is ordinary to every Christian. And it also infers that all men have the testimony of the Spirit, who believe the Scriptures to be God's word, which would delude many natural men, who feel that they do believe this, though some unsoundly tell us that an unregenerate man cannot believe it. I know that, savingly, he cannot; but undissemblingly, as the devil does, he may. But I leave this point, referring the reader that understands them, for full satisfaction about the nature of the Spirit's testimony, to learned

Robert Baronius,¹ 'Apol. con. Turnebullum,' p. 733; and also to judicious Amyraldus, 'Thes. de Testim. Spir. in Thes. Salmuriens.,' vol. i. p. 122: in both whom it is most solidly handled.

4. Doubtless, the first and chief work of preachers of the Gospel, is to endeavour the conversion of pagans and infidels, where men live within their reach, and have opportunity to do it. And we all believe that the Jews shall be brought in; and it must be by means. And how shall all this be done, if we cannot prove to them the divine authority of what we have to say to them, but naked affirmation? Or, how shall we maintain the credit of Christianity, if we be put to dispute the case with an infidel? I know somewhat may be done by tradition where Scripture is not; but that is a weaker, uncertain means: I know also that the first truths, and those that are known by the light of nature, may be evinced by natural demonstrations: and when we deal with pagans, there we must begin. But for all supernatural truth, how shall we prove that to them, but by proving first the certainty of the revelation? As Aquinas, ut in marg.,^m to tell them that the Spirit testifieth it, is no means to convince them that have not the Spirit. And if they have the Spirit already, then what need we preach to convince them? If the word must be mixed with faith in them that hear it, before it profit them further to salvation; then we cannot expect to find the Spirit in infidels. He that thinks an unholy person may not believe the Scriptures to be the word of God, doth not surely think that they may go so much further as our divines and the Scripture tell us they may do.ⁿ

And to tell an infidel that it is *principium indemonstrabile*,

¹ Pessime, ni fallor, argumentatur vir doctiss. Keckerman. Systemate Theol. lib. p. 179: Soli electi habent fidem: ergo soli electi norunt quæ sit norma fidei. This will teach the vilest man to conclude that he is elect, because he knows the rule of faith.

^m See also the Act of the Conference at Paris, 1565, July in the beginning.

ⁿ Ad primæ veritatis manifestationem per rationes demonstrativas procedendum est. Sed quia tales rationes (i.e. ab evidentia rei) ad secundam veritatem haberi non possunt, non debet esse ad hoc intentio, ut adversarius rationibus (i.e. a re) convincatur, sed ut ejus rationes quas contra veritatem habet solvantur: cum veritati fidei ratio naturalis contraria esse non possit. Singularis vero modus convincendi adversarium contra hujusmodi veritatem, est ex autoritate Scripturæ divinitus confirmata miraculis. Quæ enim supra rationem humanam sunt; non credimus, nisi Deo revelante.—*Aquin. Cont. Gentil.* lib. 1. c. 9. Vid. etiam de hac re Spalatens. de Rep. Eccles. lib. 7. c. 9. sect. 17, 18, 21; et c. 2. sect. 8 et 22.

that Scripture is God's word, and that it is to be believed, and not to be proved, as if the very revelation, *Hoc esse testimonium divinum*, and not only the thing testified, *Hoc esse verum*, were not *objectum scientiæ, sed puræ fidei*. This might sooner harden infidels, than convince them. Sure I am, that both Christ and his apostles used sufficient, *in suo genere*, convincing arguments to persuade men to believe, and dealt with men as rational creatures. Truly, saith Hooker,^o "It is not a thing impossible, nor greatly hard, even by such kind of proofs so to manifest and clear that point, that no man living shall be able to deny it, without denying some apparent principle, such as all men acknowledge to be true. And Scripture teacheth us that saving truth, which God hath discovered to the world by revelation; but it presumeth us taught otherwise, that itself is divine and sacred. And these things we believe, knowing by reason, that Scripture is the word of God." Again, saith he, "It is not required, nor can be exacted at our hands, that we should yield it any other assent, than such as doth answer the evidence." Again, how bold and confident soever we may be in words, when it comes to the trial, such as the evidence is, which the truth hath, such is the assent; nor can it be stronger, if grounded as it should be."

5. Is not faith a rational act of a rational creature? And so the understanding proceeds discursively in its production. And is not that the strongest faith which hath the strongest reasons to prove the testimony to be valid upon which it resteth, and the clearest apprehension and use of those reasons?^p And the truest faith which hath the truest reasons truly apprehended and used? And must not that, on the contrary, be weak or false faith which receives the verity and validity of the testimony from weak or false grounds, though the testimony, of itself, be the truest in the world? Our divines use to say, concerning

^o Hooker, Eccles. Pol. 3. pp. 102, 103. and lib. 2. pp. 73, 74. I pray read him there more fully opening this point.

^p Religio omnis Christiana per apostolos tradita et scripta est, et super scripta prophetarum et apostolorum fundata.—*Dr. Sutcliff. contra Bellar. de Monach.* p. 11. See Dr. Jackson 'Of Saving Faith,' sect. 2. cap. 2. p. 143, &c. See since the first edition of this, a treatise put forth by Dr. Hammond, called 'The Reasonableness of Christian Religion.' As for those that cry out of our producing of reason in this case, as if it were Socinianism, their faith is unlike to be strong whose reason is so weak, or who renounce reason; else an infant, or a madman, would make the best Christian if reason were at such odds with faith as they imagine.

love to Christ, that it is not to be measured by the degree of fervour so much as by the grounds and motives; so that if a man should love Christ upon the same reason as the Turk loves Mahomet, it were no true love: if he love him upon false grounds, it must needs be false love; and, if upon common grounds, it can be but a common love. I will not conclude, that to believe in Jesus Christ upon the grounds that a Turk believes in Mahomet, or to believe Scripture upon the same reasons that the Turks believe the Alcoran, is no true faith, supposing that both have the like verity of their reasons; but at best, it must be more weak and doubtful.

6. Are the generality of Christians able to give any better than some such common reason, to prove the verity of Scripture: nay, are the more exercised, understanding sorts of Christians able by sound arguments to make it good, if an enemy or a temptation put them to it: nay, are the meaner sort of ministers in England able to do this? Let them that have tried, judge.

7. Can the superstructure be firm, where the foundation is sandy; and can our affections and actions be sound and strong, when our belief of Scripture is unsound or infirm? Surely this faith will have influence into all. For my own part, I take it to be the greatest cause of coldness in duty, weakness in grace, boldness in sinning, and unwillingness to die, &c., that our faith is either unsound or infirm in this point; ^p few Christians among us, for aught I find, have any better than the popish implicit faith in this point, nor any better ^q arguments than the papists have to prove Scripture the word of God. They have received it by tradition, godly ministers and Christians tell them so, it is impious to doubt of it, and therefore they believe it. And this worm, lying at the root, causeth the languishing and decay of the whole: yet it is usually undiscerned, for the root lieth secret under ground. But ^r I am apt to judge, that though the

^p Origen expoundeth the words of the apostles, Luke xvii. 5, "Lord, increase our faith," thus: Having that faith which is not according to knowledge, let us have that which is according to knowledge.—*Origen*, in cap. 10. *ad Rom.*; which Dr. Willet also citeth, and approveth in Comment. on Jud. sect. p. (mihi) 131.

^q See this more fully in Dr. Preston 'On the Attributes,' pp. 61—64.

^r See the danger and ill effects of believing Scripture on unsound grounds, excellently manifested by that excellent man of God, Mr. Pemble; *Vindic. Gratiae*, pp. 218—220. If I am able to judge any thing of the methods of Satan's temptations, I dare say that this weapon is reserved usually for the

most complain of their uncertainty of salvation, through want of assurance of their own interest, and of the weakness of the applying act of faith ; yet the greater cause of all their sorrows, and that which shakes the whole building, is the weakness of their faith about the truth of Scripture ; though, perhaps, the other be more perceived, and this taken notice of by few. There may be great weakness and unsoundness of belief, where yet no doubtings are perceived to stir. Therefore^s though we could persuade people to believe ever so confidently, that Scripture is the very word of God, and yet teach them no more reason why they should believe this, than any other book to be that word ; as it will prove in them no right way of believing, so is it in us no right way of teaching.

8. There is many a one who feels his faith shake here, who never discovers it : to doubt of our evidence, is taken for no great disgrace, and therefore men more freely profess such doubts ; nay, and some, perhaps, who are not much troubled with them, because they would be thought to be humble Christians. But to question the truth of Scripture, is a reproachful blasphemy, and therefore all that are guilty here, speak not their doubts.

9. Is not the greatest battery by all sorts of enemies, especially made against this foundation ? The first place that the papist^t assaults you in, is here ; How know you the Scripture to be the word of God ? The seekers will accost you with the like question ; How know you that your Scripture and your ministry is of God ? The familists and libertines do spit their venom here : and some Christians, by experience, are able to testify, that Satan's temptations are most violent here. Yea,

last combat ; and that many a man's faith hath perished on this rock, both in life, and especially in the last agonies and conflicts with the power of death and darkness.—*Pemble ubi supra.*

^s Yet we acknowledge it belongs to the church : first, to be a witness and keeper of the Scriptures, which are true and genuine, and which are false and superstitious, or apocryphal : secondly, to divulge and preach the Scriptures : thirdly, to expound and interpret them.—*Dr. Whitaker de Sacra Scriptura*, q. 3. cont. 1. c. 2. pp. 203, 204.

^t I would fain know of any papist, why their church believes the Scripture to be the word of God ; if the laity must believe it upon the authority of the church, and this church be the pope and his clergy, then it followeth that the pope and clergy believe it on their own authority ; as Paræus in *Themat. Secul.* xv. : *Et quia papa solus vel cum prælatis est ecclesia, ideo papa et prælati Scripturæ credunt propter seipsos. Laicos volunt credere Scripturis propter papam et prælatos.*

and our own carnal, deluded reason, is most apt of all to stumble here.

They talk of a toleration of all religions, and some desire that the "Jews may have free commerce amongst us: it will then be time for us, I think, to be well armed at this point. Let the ordinary professors of our time, who are of weak judgments, and fiery spirits, look to it, how they will stand in such assaults; lest, as now, when they cannot answer a separatist, they yield to him; and when they cannot answer an antinomian, they turn antinomians; so, then, when they can much less answer the subtle arguments of a Jew against Christ and the Gospel, they should as easily turn Jews, and deny Christ, and the verity of the Gospel.

The libertines^x among us think it necessary that we should have such a toleration to discover the unsound, who hold their faith upon tradition and custom. I am no more of their minds in this, than of his, who would have a fair virgin to lie with him, and try his chastity, and make its victory more honourable: but if we must needs have such a trial, it is time to look to the grounds of our belief, that we may be ready to give a reason of our hope.

10. However, though I were mistaken in all this, yet certain I am, that the strengthening of our faith in the verity of Scripture, would be an exceeding help to the joy of the saints, and would advance their confident hopes of rest. For myself, if my faith in this point had no imperfection, if I did as verily believe the glory to come, as I do believe that the sun will rise

^u Sicut in Polonia ubi non solum preces recitant, mala et criminosa contra Christianos et eorum magistratus continentes, sed etiam et audacter et sine omni Christianorum metu imprimunt quæcunque volunt, ut testatur Buxtorfius *Synagogæ Judaicæ*, c. 5. p. 170. Nam si ad divinæ traditionis (viz. in Scripturis) caput et originem revertamur, cessat error humanus. Et quicquid sub caligine et nube tenebrarum obscurum latebat, in luce veritatis aperitur.—In compendio est igitur apud religiosas et simplices mentes et errorem deponere, atque invenire et eruere veritatem.—*Cyprian. Epist. 74. ad Pomp.* p. 231.

^x If a bare connivance at these divisions have already occasioned such a combustion, what do we think would a toleration do? A toleration of all sorts of sects, and schisms, and heresies, and blasphemies, which is by some (and those more than a good many), under the abused notion of liberty of conscience, so earnestly pleaded for? For my own part, should this be once yielded, (which I hope their eyes shall first fail that look for it,) I should look on it as the passing-bell to the church's peace and glory, if not to the true religion of God in this kingdom.—*Brinsley's Arraignment of Separation*, p. 73.

again when it is set ; oh ! how would it raise my desires and my joys ; what haste should I make ; how serious should I be ; how should I trample on these earthly vanities, and even forget the things below ; how restless should I be till my right were assured to this rest ; and then, how restless, till I did possess it : how should I delight in the thought of death, and my heart leap at the tidings of its approach : how^y glad should I be of the body's decay ; to feel my prison moulder to dust ! Surely, this would be the fruit of a perfect belief of the truth of the promise of our eternal rest ; which, though it cannot be here expected, yet should we use the most strengthening means, and press on till we have attained. "Truly," saith Mr. Pemble, (*Vindic. Grat. p. 219.*) "this loose and unsettled faith is one of the fiery darts, and forcible engines of Satan, whereby he assaults and overthrows the hope and comfort of many a dying man ; who, having not strengthened himself on this point, by undoubted arguments and experiments, is there laid at where he lies open and unarmed, by such cunning cavils, shifts, and elusions against the authority of Scripture, that the poor man, not able to clear himself of them, falls into a doubting of all religion, and sinks into despair.

Sect. II. Thus much I have purposely spoken, as to stir up Christians to look to their faith, so especially to provoke some choice servants of Christ, among the multitudes of books that are written, to bestow their labours on this most needful subject ; and all ministers to preach it more frequently and clearly to their people. Some think it is faith's honour to be as credulous as may be, and the weaker are the rational grounds, the stronger is the faith ; and therefore we must believe and not dispute. Indeed, when it is once known to be a divine testimony, then the most credulous soul is the best. But when the doubt is, whether it be the testimony of God, or no, a man may easily be over credulous ; else, why are we bid, "believe not every spirit, but try them, whether they be of God, or not." And how should the false Christs, and false prophets be known, who would "deceive, were it possible, the very elect?" "To be given up of God to believe a lie," is one of the sorest of God's judgments.

Some think the only way to deal with such temptations to

^y As Graserus, when he saw his legs begin to swell with a dropsy, said, *Euge Deo sit laus et gloria, quod jam mea instet liberatio et horula gratissima.*
—*Melch. Adam. in vita Graseri.*

blasphemy, is to cast them away, and not to dispute them;² and I think the direction is very good, so it be used with distinction and caution. The rule holds good against real blasphemy, known to be such; but if the person know it not, how shall he make use of this rule against it? Further, it is supposed, that he who knows it to be blasphemy, hath arguments whereby to prove it such; else, how doth he know it? Therefore, here lies the sin; when a man is, by sufficient evidence, convinced, or, at least, hath evidence sufficient for conviction, that it is a divine testimony, and yet is still cherishing doubts, or hearkening to temptations which may feed those doubts; when a man, like Balaam, will take no answer. But he who will, therefore, cast away all doubts before he hath any arguments sufficient against them, or could ever prove the thing in question, he doth indeed cast aside the temptation, but not overcome it, and may expect it should shortly return again; it is a methodical cure which prevents a relapse. Such a neglecter of temptations may be in the right, and may as well be in the wrong; however, it is not right to him, because not rightly believed. Faith always implies a knowledge, and the knowledge usually of the matter and author of that testimony; divine faith hath ever a divine^a testimony, and supposeth the knowledge of the matter, when the faith is particular, but always of the author of that testimony. An implicit faith in God, that is, a believing that all is true which he testifieth, though we see no reason for it, from the evidence of the matter, this is necessary to every true believer: but to believe implicitly, that the testimony is divine, or that Scripture is the word of God, this is not to believe God, but to resolve our faith into some human testimony; even to lay our foundation upon the sand, where all will fall at the next assault.

It is strange to consider how we all abhor that piece of popery, as most injurious to God of all the rest, which resolves our faith into the authority of the church: and yet that we do; for the generality of professors content ourselves with the same kind of faith. Only with this difference: the papists believe

² Impias argumentationes si ratio refutare non possit, fides irridere debet, quæ ratiocinationes evertit, et in captivitatem redigit omnem intellectum in Christi obsequium.—*August.*

^a Though some extend belief so far as to confound it with opinion. A natura ad mysteria, ab oculo ad oraculum, a visu ad fidem, non valet consequentia.

Scripture to be the word of God, because their church saith so;^b and we, because our church, or our leaders say so. Yea, and many ministers never yet gave their people better grounds, but tell them, which is true, that it is damnable to deny it, but help them not to the necessary antecedents of faith.

If any think that these words tend to the shaking of men's faith, I answer, first, only of that which will fall of itself; secondly, and that it may, in time, be built again more strongly; thirdly, or at least that the sound may be surer settled. It is to be understood that many a thousand do profess Christianity, and zealously hate the enemies thereof upon the same grounds, to the same ends, and from the same inward, corrupt principles, as the Jews did hate and kill Christ.^c It is the religion of the country, where every man is reproached who believes otherwise; they were born and brought up in this belief, and it hath increased in them upon the like occasions. Had they been born and bred in the religion of Mahomet, they would have been as zealous for him. The difference betwixt him and a Mahometan is more, that he lives where better laws and religion dwell, than that he hath more knowledge or soundness of apprehension.

Yet would I not drive into causeless doubtings the soul of any true believers, or make them believe their faith is unsound, because it is not so strong as some others; therefore I add, some may, perhaps, have ground for their belief, though they are not able to express it by argumentation; and may have arguments in their hearts to persuade themselves, though they have none in their mouths to persuade another; yea, and those arguments in themselves may be solid and convincing. Some may be strengthened by some one sound argument, and yet be ignorant of all the rest, without overthrowing the truth of their faith. Some, also, may have weaker apprehensions of the divine authority of Scripture than others;^d and as weaker grounds for their faith, so a less degree of assent; and yet that assent may be sincere and saving, so it have these two qualifica-

^b Sequor te non quo ducis, sed quo trahis, inquit Scaliger ad Cardanum in Exerc.

^c He that doubts of this, let him see Dr. Jackson, of 'Saving Faith,' pp. 146, 147; and Mr. Pinke's 'Sermons of the Sincerity of Love to Christ.'

^d Articulus vi. fidei Judaicæ sic se habet: Credo perfecta fide quod omne, quodcunque prophetæ docuerunt et locuti fuerunt, veritas sincera sit. Octavus autem sic; credo perfecta fide quod lex tota, perinde ut ea hodierno tempore in manibus nostris est, ita per Deum ipsum et Mosi tradita sit.—*Buxtorf. Synagog. Judaicæ*, cap. i. pp. 4, 5.

tions: 1. If the arguments which we have for believing the Scripture, be in themselves more sufficient to convince of its truth, than any arguments of the enemies of Scripture can be to persuade a man to the contrary; and do accordingly discover to us a high degree, at least, of probability. 2. And if being thus far convinced, it prevails with us to choose this as the only way of life, and to adventure our souls upon this way, denying all other, and adhering, though to the loss of estate and life, to the truth of Christ, thus weakly apprehended. This, I think, God will accept as true belief.

But though such a faith may serve to salvation, yet when the Christian should use it for his consolation he will find it much fail him, even as legs or arms of the weak or lame, which when a man should use them, do fail them according to the degrees of their weakness or lameness; so much doubting as there remains of the truth of the word, or so much weakness as there is in our believing, or so much darkness or uncertainty as there is in the evidence which persuades us to believe; so much will be wanting to our love, desires, labours, adventures, and, especially, to our joys.

Therefore I think it necessary to speak a little, and but a little, to fortify the believer against temptations, and to confirm his faith in the certain truth of that Scripture which contains the promises of this rest.

CHAP. III.

SECT. I. And here it is necessary that we first distinguish betwixt, 1. The subject matter of Scripture, or the doctrine which it contains: 2. And the words or writings containing or expressing this doctrine. The one is as the blood, the other as the veins in which it runs. Secondly, we must distinguish betwixt, 1. The substantial and fundamental part of scripture doctrine, without which there is no salvation: and, 2. The circumstantial and the less necessary part, as genealogies, successions, chronology, &c.

Thirdly: Of the substantial, fundamental parts, 1. Some may be known and proved, even without Scripture, as being written in nature itself. 2. Some can be known only by the assent of faith to divine revelation.

Fourthly: Of this last sort, 1. Some things are above reason, as it is without divine revelation, both in respect of their proba-

bility, existence, and futurity ; 2. Others may be known by mere reason, without divine testimony, in regard of their possibility and probability, but not in regard of their existence and futurity.

Fifthly: Again, matter of doctrine must be distinguished from matter of fact.

Sixthly: Matter of fact is either, 1. Such as God produceth in an ordinary, or, 2. Extraordinary and miraculous way.

Seventhly: History and prophecy must be distinguished.

Eighthly: We must distinguish also the books and writings themselves: 1. Between the main scope, and those parts which express the chief contents ; and, 2. Particular words and phrases not expressing any substantial.

Ninthly: Also it is one question, 1. Whether there be a certain number of books which are canonical, or of divine authority ? And, 2. Another question, what number there is of these, and which particular books they are ?

Tenthly: The direct express sense must be distinguished from that which is only implied or consequential.

Eleventhly: We must distinguish revelation unwritten, from that which is written.

Twelfthly and lastly: We must distinguish that scripture which was spoken or written by God immediately, from that which was spoken or written immediately by man, and but mediately by God. And of this last sort, 1. Some of the instruments or penmen are known ; 2. Some not known. Of those known, 1. Some that spoke much in Scripture were bad men ; 2. Others were godly : and of these, some were, 1. More eminent and extraordinary, as prophets and apostles ; 2. Others were persons more inferior and ordinary.

Again ; As we must distinguish of scripture and divine testimony, so must we also distinguish the apprehension of faith by which we do receive it.

1. There is a divine faith, when we take the testimony to be God's own, and so believe the thing testified as upon God's words. Secondly, there is a human faith, when we believe it merely upon the credit of man.

2. Faith is either, first, implicit, when we believe the thing is true, though we understand not what it is ; or, secondly, explicit, when we believe, and understand what we believe. Both these are, again, divine or human.

3. It is one thing to believe it as probable, another thing to believe it as certain.

4. It is one thing to believe it to be true conditionally, another to believe it absolutely.

5. We must distinguish betwixt the bare assent of the understanding, to the truth of an axiom, when it is only silenced by force of argument, which will be stronger or weaker as the argument seemeth more or less demonstrative. And, secondly, that deep apprehension and firm assent which proceedeth from a well-established, confirmed faith backed by experience.

6. It is one thing to assent to the truth of the axiom, another to taste and choose the good contained in it, which is the work of the will.

Sect. II. The use I shall make of these distinctions, is to open the way to these following positions, which will resolve the great questions on foot, how far the belief of the writtten word is of necessity to salvation, and whether it be the foundation of our faith, and whether this foundation hath been always the same?

Pos. 1. The object of belief, is the will of God revealed, or a divine testimony, where two things are absolutely necessary: first, the matter; secondly, the revelation.^e

^e We must, therefore, know it to be a divine testimony, before we can believe it *fide divina*. For if you do merely believe it to be God's word, it is either by a divine testimony or without; if without, then it is not *fides divina*, a belief of God; if by it, then why do you believe that testimony to be divine? If upon another divine testimony, so you may run in infinitum. But you will say, the first testimony which witnesseth of truth doth also witness itself to be of God. Answ. If you mean, that it so witnesseth as a testimony to be merely believed, then the question, how you know it to be a divine testimony, will still recur in infinitum; but if you mean that it witnesseth itself to be divine objectively to our reason, as having the evidence of a divine spirit and authority, then you say right. But, then, as this supposeth the use of other helps to our knowledge, as tradition by human, infallible testimony, &c., so this granteth that it is more properly known than believed to be a divine testimony. Yet this is not our resolving our faith into reason or human testimony, but a discerning by reason and the help of human testimony the marks of a divine author in the writing, and the miracles, &c.; and thence also by reason concluding the divineness of that testimony into which my faith is resolved. As I detest their use of tradition, which would make it a part of God's law, to supply the defect of Scripture; so I detest that infidelity, which rejecteth all Scripture, save that which suiteth their reason, and where they can see the evidence of the thing itself. If I once know that God speaks it, I will believe any thing that he saith, though it seem ever so unreasonable: but yet I will see reason for the divineness of the testimony, and know that it is indeed God that speaks it, else I must believe every testimony which affirms itself to be divine: and for those that say they only believe Scripture to be God's word, because it so testifieth of itself, and do not know it, and so make it a proper act of faith, and not of knowledge, I ask them, 1. Why, then, do you not believe (but hold him accursed) an angel from heaven, if he preach another Gospel besides this, and say; 'It is come from God;' and so every one that saith, 'I am Christ?' 2. Why do you use to produce reasons from the objective

2. All this revealed will is necessary^f to the completing of our faith;^g and it is our duty to believe it. But it is only the

characters of divinity in the Scriptures, when you prove it to testify of itself? Do you not know, that to discern those characters as the premises, and thence to conclude the divinity, is an act of knowledge, and not of faith? Else you should only say, when you are asked, how you know Scripture to be the word of God, that you believe it, because it saith so, and not give any reason from the thing why you believe it. 3. And then how will you prove it against a Celsus, or Lucian, or Porphyry, or convince Turks and Indians? 4. And why were the Bereans commended for trying apostolical doctrine, whether it were true or not? 5. And why are we bid to try the spirits whether they be of God? What, if one of these spirits say as the old prophet, or as Rabshakeh to Hezekiah, "that he comes from God, and God bid him speak," will you believe, or try by reason? 6. Doth not your doctrine make your belief to be wholly human, as having no divine testimony for the divinity of the first testimony? And so what are all your graces like to prove, which are built hereon? And what a sad influence must this needs have in all our duties and comforts? If you fly to the inward testimony of the Spirit, as distinct from the sanctifying illumination of the Spirit, then the question is most difficult of all, How you know the testimony of that Spirit to be divine? unless you will take in the fearful delusion of the enthusiasts, and say, That the Spirit manifesteth the divinity of his own testimony. And then I ask, Doth it manifest it to reason, or only to inward sense? If to reason, then you come to that you fly from; and then you can produce that reason, and prove it. If only to inward sense, then how know you but a counterfeit angel of light may produce more strange effects in your soul, than these which you take to be such a manifestation? especially seeing, (1.) We know so little of spirits, and what they can do. (2.) And we have still known those that pretended to the strongest sense of spiritual revelations, to have proved the most deluded persons in the end. 7. Doth not your doctrine teach men, in laying aside reason, to lay aside humanity, and to become brutes? If faith and reason be so contrary, as some men talk; yea, or reason so useless, then you may believe best in your sleep; and idiots, infants, and madmen, are the fittest to make Christians of. 8. And what an injurious doctrine is this to Christ, and disgraceful to the christian faith! 9. And how would it harden infidels, and make them deride us, rather than believe! Thus much I am forced here to add, both because I see many teachers have need to be taught these principles (the more is the pity), and, 2. Because some reverend brethren, by their exceptions, have called me to it. In a word, reason rectified is the eye of the soul, the guide of the life; the illumination of the Spirit is the rectifying it. No small part of our sanctification lieth in the rectifying of our reason. The use of the word, and all ordinances and providences, is first to rectify reason, and thereby the will, and thereby the life. Faith itself is an act of reason; or else it is a brutish act, and not human. The stronger any man's reason is, the more strongly is he persuaded that God is true, and that he cannot lie; and therefore whatsoever he saith must needs be true, though reason cannot discern the thing in its own evidence. He that hath the rightest reason hath the most grace. Sincerity, and consequently our salvation, lieth in the strength and prevalency of rectified reason over the flesh, and all its interests and desires. But, without Scripture or divine revelation, and the Spirit's powerful illumination, reason can never be rectified in spirituals. By thus much, judge of the ignorance and vanity of those men, who when they read any that write of the reasonableness of christian religion, do presently accuse it, or suspect it of Socinianism.

^f Ad bene esse et fidei perfectionem.

^g Necessitate præcepti.

substance and tenor of the covenants, and the things necessarily supposed to the knowing and keeping of the covenant of grace, which are of absolute necessity to the being of faith, and to salvation. A man may be saved, though he should not believe many things, which yet he is bound by God to believe. 3. Yet this must be only through ignorance of the matter, or of the divineness of the testimony. For a flat unbelief of the smallest truth, when we know the testimony to be of God, will not stand with the being of true faith, nor with salvation. For reason lays down this ground, That God can speak nothing but truth; and faith proceeds upon that supposition. 4. This doctrine, so absolutely necessary, hath not been ever from the beginning the same, but hath differed according to the different covenants and administrations. That doctrine which is now so necessary, was not so before the fall; and that which is so necessary since the coming of Christ, was not so before his coming. Then they might be saved in believing in the Messiah to come of the seed of David: but now it is of necessity to believe, that this Jesus, the son of Mary, is He, and that we look not for another. I prove it thus: That which is not revealed, can be no object of our faith; much less so necessary: but Christ was not revealed before the fall; nor this Jesus revealed to be He, before his coming; therefore these were not of necessity to be believed, or, as some metaphorically speak, they were then no fundamental doctrines. Perhaps, also, some things will be found of absolute necessity to us, which are not so to Indians and Turks. 5. God hath made this substance of scripture doctrine to be thus necessary,^h primarily, and for itself. 6. That it be revealed, is also of absolute necessity: but,ⁱ secondarily, and for the doctrine's sake, as a means without which believing is neither possible, nor a duty. And though where there is no revelation, faith is not necessary as a duty; yet it may be necessary, I think, as a means, that is, our natural misery may be such as can no other way be cured; but this concerns not us that have heard of Christ. 7. Nature, creatures, and Providence, are no sufficient revelation of this tenor of the covenants. 8. It is necessary not only that this doctrine be revealed, but also that it be revealed with grounds and arguments rationally sufficient to evince the verity of the doctrine, or the divineness of the testimony, that from it we may conclude the former. 9. The revelation of truth is to be considered in respect of the first

^h Primario et propter se.ⁱ Secundario et propter aliud.

immediate delivery from God : or, secondly, in respect of the way of its coming down to us, it is delivered by God immediately either by writing, as the two tables, or by informing angels, who may be his messengers, or by inspiring some choice, particular men ; so that few in the world have received it from God at the first hand. 10. The only ways of revelations that, for aught I know, are now left, are Scripture and tradition. For though God hath not tied himself from revelations by the Spirit, yet he hath ceased them, and perfected his scripture revelations ; so that the Spirit only reveals what is revealed already in the word, by illuminating us to understand it. 11. The more immediate the revelation, *cæteris paribus*, the more sure ; and the more succession of hands it passeth through, the more uncertain, especially in matter of doctrine. 12. When we receive from men, by tradition, the doctrine of God, as in the words of God, there is less danger of corruption, than when they deliver us that doctrine in their own words ; because here taking liberty to vary the expressions, it will represent the truth more uncertainly, and in more various shapes. 13. Therefore hath God been pleased, when he ceased immediate revelation, to leave his will written in a form of words which should be his standing law and rule to try all other men's expressions by. 14. In all the fore-mentioned respects, therefore, the written word doth excel the unwritten tradition of the same doctrine. 15. Yet unwritten tradition, or any sure way of revealing this doctrine, may suffice to save him who thereby is brought to believe ; as if there be any among the Abassines of Ethiopia, the Coptics of Egypt, or elsewhere, that have the substance of the covenants delivered them by unwritten tradition, or by other writings, if hereby they come to believe, they shall be saved. For so the promise of the Gospel runs, giving salvation to all that believe, by what means soever they were brought to it. The like may be said of true believers in those parts of the church of Rome, where the Scripture is wholly hid from the vulgar, if there be any such parts. 16. Yet where the written word is wanting, salvation must needs be more difficult and more rare, and faith more feeble, and men's conversations worse ordered, because they want that clearer revelation, that surer rule of faith and life, which might make the way of salvation more easy. 17. When tradition ariseth no higher, or cometh originally but from this written word, and not from the verbal testimonies of the apostles before the word was written, there that

tradition is but the preaching of the word, and not a distinct way of revealing. 18. Such is most of the tradition, for aught I can learn, that is now on foot in the world, for matter of doctrine, but not for matter of fact. 19. Therefore the Scriptures are not only necessary to the well-being of the church, and to the strength of faith, but, ordinarily, to the very being of faith and churches. 20. Not that the present possession of Scripture is of absolute necessity to the present being of a church; nor that it is so absolutely necessary to every man's salvation, that he read or know this Scripture himself; but that it either be at present, or have been formerly in the church: that some knowing it, may teach it to others, is of absolute necessity to most persons and churches, and necessary to the well-being of all. 21. Though negative unbelief of the authority of Scripture may stand with salvation, yet positive and universal, I think, cannot: or, though tradition may save where Scripture is not known, yet he that reads, or hears the Scripture, and will not believe it to be the testimony of God, I think, cannot be saved, because this is now the clearest and surest revelation; and he that will not believe it, will much less believe a revelation more uncertain and obscure. 22. Though all Scripture be of divine authority, yet he that believeth but some one book, which containeth the substance of the doctrine of salvation, may be saved; much more they that have doubted but of some particular books. 23. They that take the Scripture to be but the writings of godly, honest men, and so to be only a means of making known Christ, having a gradual precedency to the writings of other godly men, and do believe in Christ upon those strong grounds which are drawn from his doctrine, miracles, &c., rather than upon the testimony of the writing, as being purely infallible and divine, may yet have a divine and saving faith. 24. Much more, those that believe the whole writing to be of divine inspiration where it handleth the substance, but doubt whether God infallibly guide them in every circumstance. 25. And yet more, those that believe that the Spirit did guide the writers to truth, both in substance and circumstance, but doubt whether he guided them in orthography; or whether their pens were as perfectly guided as their minds. 26. And yet more, may those have saving faith, who only doubt whether Providence infallibly guided any transcribers, or printers, as to retain any copy that perfectly agrees with the autograph: yea, whether the most perfect copy now extant, may not have some inconsiderable literal or verbal errors,

through the transcribers' or printers' oversight, is of no great moment, as long as it is certain, that the Scriptures are not *de industria* corrupted, nor any material doctrine, history, or prophecy thereby obscured or depraved. God hath not engaged himself to direct every printer to the world's end, to do his work without any error. Yet it is unlikely that this should deprave all copies, or leave us uncertain wholly of the right reading, especially since copies were multiplied, because it is unlikely that all transcribers, or printers, will commit the very same error. We know the true copies of our statute books, though the printer be not guided by an unerring spirit. See Usher's 'Epistle to Lud. Capell.' 27. Yet do all, or most of these, in my judgment, cast away a singular prop to their faith, and lay it open to dangerous assaults, and doubt of that which is a certain truth. 28. As the translations are no further Scripture, than they agree with the copies in the original tongues; so neither are those copies further than they agree with the autographs, or original copies, or with some copies perused and approved by the apostles. 29. Yet is there not the like necessity of having the autographs to try the transcripts by, as there is of having the original transcripts to try the translations by. For there is an impossibility that any translation should perfectly express the sense of the original. But there is a possibility, probability, and facility, of true transcribing, and grounds to prove it true, *de facto*, as we shall touch anon. 30. That part which was written by the finger of God, as also the substance of doctrine through the whole Scriptures, are so purely divine, that they have not in them any thing human. 31. The next to these, are the words that were spoken by the mouth of Christ, and then those that were spoken by angels. 32. The circumstantialia are many of them so divine, as yet they have in them something human, as the bringing of Paul's cloak and parchments, and, as it seems, his counsel about marriage, &c. 33. Much more is there something human, in the method and phrase, which is not so immediately divine as the doctrine. 34. Yet is there nothing sinfully human, and therefore nothing false in all. 35. But an innocent imperfection there is in the method and phrase, which if we deny, we must renounce most of our logic and rhetoric. 36. Yet was this imperfect way, at that time, all things considered, the fittest way to divulge the Gospel. That is the best language which is best suited to the hearers, and not that which is best simply in itself, and supposeth that under-

standing in the hearers which they have not. Therefore it was wisdom and mercy to fit the Scriptures to the capacity of all. Yet will it not, therefore, follow, that all preachers at all times, should as much neglect definition, distinction, syllogism, &c., as Scripture doth. 37. Some doctrinal passages in Scripture are only historically related, and therefore the relating them is not asserting them for truth; and therefore those sentences may be false, and yet not the Scriptures false: yea, some falsehoods are written by way of reproving them, as Gehazi's lie, Saul's excuse, &c. 38. Every doctrine that is thus related only historically, is therefore of doubtful credit, because it is not a divine assertion, except Christ himself were the speaker, and therefore it is to be tried by the rest of the Scripture. 39. Where ordinary men were the speakers, the credit of such doctrine is the more doubtful, and yet much more, when the speakers were wicked; of the former sort are the speeches of Job's friends, and divers others; of the latter sort are the speeches of the Pharisees, &c., and perhaps Gamaliel's counsels. (Acts v. 34.) 40. Yet where God doth testify his inspiration, or approbation, the doctrine is of divine authority, though the speaker be wicked, as in Balaam's prophecy. 41. The like may be said of matter of fact;^k for it is not either necessary or lawful, to speak such words or do such actions, merely because men in Scripture did so speak or do; no, not though they were the best saints; for their own speeches or actions are to be judged by the law, and therefore are no part of the law themselves. And as they are evil where they cross the law, as Joseph's swearing, the ancients' polygamy, &c., so are they doubtful where their congruence with the law is doubtful. 42. But here is one most observable exception, conducing much to resolve that great doubt, whether examples bind; where men are designed by God to such an office, and act by commission, and with a promise of direction, their doctrines are of divine authority, though we find not where God did dictate; and their actions done by that commission are current and exemplary, so far as they are intended or performed for example; and so example may be equivalent to a law, and the argument, *à facto ad jus*, may hold. So Moses being appointed to the forming of the old church and commonwealth of the Jews, to the building of the tabernacle, &c. His precepts and examples in these works, though we could not find his

^k A facto ad jus ad licitum vel debitum non valet argum.

particular direction, are to be taken as divine. So also the apostles, having commission to form and order the gospel-churches, their doctrine and examples therein, are by their general commission warranted; and their practices in establishing the Lord's day, in settling the offices and orders of churches, are to us as laws, still binding with those limitations as positives only, which give way to greater. 43. The ground of this position is, because it is inconsistent with the wisdom and faithfulness of God; to send men to a work, and promise to be with them, and yet to forsake them, and suffer them to err in the building of that house, which must endure till the end of the world. 44. Yet if any of the commissioners do err in their own particular conversations,¹ or in matters without the extent of their commission, this may consist with the faithfulness of God; God hath not promised them infallibility and perfection; the disgrace is their own: but if they should miscarry in that wherein they are sent to be a rule to others, the church would then have an imperfect rule, and the dishonour would redound to God. 45. Yet I find not that ever God authorized any mere man to be a lawgiver to the church in substantials, but only to deliver the laws which he had given to interpret them, and to determine circumstantials not by him determined. 46. Where God owneth men's doctrines and examples by miracles, they are to be taken as infallibly divine; much more, when commission, promises, and miracles, do concur, which confirmeth the apostles' examples for current. 47. So that if any of the kings or prophets had given laws, and formed the church, as Moses, they had not been binding, because without the said commission; or if any other minister of the Gospel shall by word or action arrogate an apostolical privilege. 48. There is no verity about God, or the chief happiness of man written in nature, but it is to be found written in Scriptures.^m 49. So that the same thing may, in these several respects, be the object both of knowledge and of faith. 50. The Scripture being so perfect a transcript of the law of nature or reason, is much more to be credited in its supernatural revelations. 51. The probability of most things, and the possibility of all things contained in the Scriptures, may well be discerned by reason itself, which makes their existence or futurity the more easy to be believed. 52. Yet before this existence or futurity of any thing beyond the reach of reason

¹ As Peter, Gal. ii. 12, 13.

^m Sufficiunt quidem sanctæ ac divinitus inspiratæ Scripturæ ad omnem instructionem veritatis.—*Athanas. lib. 1. cont. Gentil. initio.*

can be soundly believed, the testimony must be known to be truly divine. 53. Yet a belief of scripture doctrine as probable, doth usually go before a belief of certainty, and is a good preparative thereto. 54. The direct, express sense, must be believed directly and absolutely as infallible, and the consequences where they may be clearly and certainly raised: but where there is danger of erring in raising consequences, the assent can be but weak and conditional. 55. A consequence raised from Scripture, being no part of the immediate sense, cannot be called any part of Scripture. 56. Where one of the premises is in nature, and the other only in Scripture, there the conclusion is mixed, partly known, and partly believed. That it is the consequence of those premises is known; but that it is a truth, is, as I said, apprehended by a mixed act. Such is a Christian's concluding himself to be justified and sanctified, &c. 57. Where, through weakness, we are unable to discern the consequences, there is enough in the express direct sense for salvation. 58. Where the sense is not understood, there the belief can be but implicit. 59. Where the sense is partly understood, but with some doubting, the belief can be but conditionally explicit; that is, we believe it, if it be the sense of the word. 60. Fundamentals must be believed explicitly and absolutely.ⁿ

CHAP. IV.

The First Argument to prove Scripture to be the Word of God.

SECT. 1. Having thus showed you in what sense the Scriptures are the word of God, and how far to be believed, and

ⁿ Credere autem hæc talia debemus Deo, qui et nos fecit rectissime scientes, quia Scripturæ quidem perfectæ sunt; quippe a verbo Dei et spiritu ejus dictatæ. Nos autem secundum quod minores sumus, et novissimi à verbo Dei et spiritu ejus, secundum hoc et scientia mysteriorum ejus indigemus. Et non est mirum si in spiritualibus, cœlestibus, in his quæ habent revelari, hoc patimur nos: quandoquidem etiam eorum quæ ante pedes sunt, (dico autem quæ sunt in hac creatura, quæ et conteruntur à nobis, et videntur, et sunt nobiscum) multa fugerunt nostram scientiam, et Deo hæc ipsa committimus. Oportet enim eum præ omnibus præcellare. Quid enim si tentemus exponere causam ascensionis Nili? Multa quidem dicimus, et fortassis suasoria, fortassis autem non suasoria; quod autem verum est et certum adjacet Deo. Sed et volantium animalium habitatio, eorum quæ veris tempore adveniunt ad nos, et autumnus recedunt, cum in hoc mundo hoc ipsum fiat, fugit nostram scientiam, &c.—*Irenæus adv. Hæres.* lib. 2. c. 47.

what is the excellency, necessity, and authority of them, I shall now add three or four arguments to help your faith, which, I hope, will not only prove them to be a divine testimony to the substance of doctrine (though that be a useful work against unbelief), but also that they are the very written laws of God, and a perfect rule of faith and duty. (2 Tim. iii.16.) My arguments shall be but few, because I handle it but on the by, and those such as I find little of in ordinary writings, lest I should waste time in doing what is done to my hands.

1. ° Those writings and that doctrine which were confirmed by many and real ^p miracles, must needs be of God, and consequently of undoubted truth. But the books and doctrines of canonical Scripture were so confirmed : therefore, &c.

Against the major proposition nothing of any moment can be said ; for it is a truth apparent enough to nature, that none but God can work real miracles, or, at least, none but those whom he doth especially enable thereto ; and it is as manifest that the righteous and faithful God will not give this power for a seal to any falsehood or deceit.

The usual objections are these : first, antichrist shall come with lying wonders.^q

Ans. They are no true miracles : as they are τέρατα ψεύδους, (2 Thess. ii. 9,) lying, in sealing to a lying doctrine : so also in being but seeming and counterfeit miracles. The like may be said to those of Pharaoh's magicians, and all other sorcerers and witches, and those that may be wrought by Satan himself. They may be wonders, but not miracles.^r

° See this argument from miracles, managed by Camero Prælect. ' De Verbo Dei,' (fol.) pp. 439—441, &c., and Grotius ' De Verit. Religionis Christianæ.' Vide et Polan. Syntag. lib. 1. c. 17.

^p Donum et miraculorum et linguarum dandarum fuisse et extraordinarium, et a solis apostolis (peculiari privilegio dato à Christo) conferri solitum, certo certius est.—*Danaus contr. Bellarm. de Baptismo*, p. 443. But this certio certius is a mistake, if he intend to exclude all besides apostles.

^q Nam ut Ægyptiorum vatum nequaquam vis omnis æquari gratiæ potest, quæ Mosi mirandum est in modum collata. Sed exitus arguit, Ægyptios præstigiis niti : Moysen vero quæ gesserit, gessisse divinitus. Sic et eorum qui Christi falso sibi nomen adsciscunt, et qui perinde ac Jesu discipuli virtutes mentiuntur et prodigia ; coarguuntur plane vel in omnis iniquitatis seductiones fallaces, &c.—*Origen. contr. Celsum*, lib. 2. fol. (mihi) 23. G. I do not not believe that God would have let the Egyptian sorcerers do so great things as they did, had not Moses been present, that so his miracles might discredit their wonders, and God be the more magnified by the conquest.

^r Fuerunt miracula ut buccinæ atque præcones quibus evangelium commendabatur. Ut enim lex Mosis compluribus miraculis in monte Sinæ et per desertum autoritatem sibi conciliavit, quæ postea destiterunt cum d

Object. 2. God may enable false professors to work miracles to try the world, without any derogation to his faithfulness.

Answer. No: for divine power being properly the attendant of divine revelation, if it should be assumed to delusional delusion, it would be a sufficient excuse to the world for their believing these delusions. And if miracles should not be a sufficient seal to prove the authenticity of the witness to be divine, then is there nothing in the world sufficient; and so our faith will be quite unnecessary.

Object. But, however, miracles will at least prove Christ to be the son of God, than they will prove Moses, Elias, or Elisha, to be the sons of God, for they wrought miracles as well as Christ.

Answer. Miracles are God's seal,¹ not to seal the person that is instrumental, nor for his glory; but to seal God, and for his own glory. God does not invest any creature with his seal so absolutely, so that they may use it when, and in what time they please. If Moses, or Elias, had affirmed themselves to be the sons of God, they could never have confirmed their affirmation with a miracle; for God would not have sealed to a lie. Christ's power of working miracles did not immediately prove him to be the Christ, but it immediately proved his testimony to be divine, and that testimony seals his nature and office; so that the power of miracles in the prophets and apostles was not to attest to their own pretensions, but to the truth of their testimony concerning Christ. Whosoever any man asserts to me, and would a good miracle to confirm it, I must needs take upon me to believe him.

Object. But what if some one should work miracles to confirm a doctrine contrary to Scripture, would you believe it? Shall not Paul say, "If an angel from heaven teach any other doctrine, let him be accursed?"

Answer. I am sure God will never give any false teacher the power of confirming his doctrine by miracles;² also God should

never promiscuously reward any religious nature; miracles must proceed either from, or under the influence of, the Holy Spirit. From the great power of the Holy Spirit in Moses 12, 17, and Elisha, we do think beyond question. *For More See Genesis. Chap. 1. 2. 8. and 30.*

¹ See how Christ's doctrine proved his testimony, in *Revelation 19. 11. 12.* *13.* *14.* *15.* *16.* *17.* *18.* *19.* *20.* *21.* *22.* *23.* *24.* *25.* *26.* *27.* *28.* *29.* *30.* *31.* *32.* *33.* *34.* *35.* *36.* *37.* *38.* *39.* *40.* *41.* *42.* *43.* *44.* *45.* *46.* *47.* *48.* *49.* *50.* *51.* *52.* *53.* *54.* *55.* *56.* *57.* *58.* *59.* *60.* *61.* *62.* *63.* *64.* *65.* *66.* *67.* *68.* *69.* *70.* *71.* *72.* *73.* *74.* *75.* *76.* *77.* *78.* *79.* *80.* *81.* *82.* *83.* *84.* *85.* *86.* *87.* *88.* *89.* *90.* *91.* *92.* *93.* *94.* *95.* *96.* *97.* *98.* *99.* *100.* *101.* *102.* *103.* *104.* *105.* *106.* *107.* *108.* *109.* *110.* *111.* *112.* *113.* *114.* *115.* *116.* *117.* *118.* *119.* *120.* *121.* *122.* *123.* *124.* *125.* *126.* *127.* *128.* *129.* *130.* *131.* *132.* *133.* *134.* *135.* *136.* *137.* *138.* *139.* *140.* *141.* *142.* *143.* *144.* *145.* *146.* *147.* *148.* *149.* *150.* *151.* *152.* *153.* *154.* *155.* *156.* 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² That is, that God will never give a miracle to any man who may be his instrument, as *Acts. 13. 16.* *17.* *18.* *19.* *20.* *21.* *22.* *23.* *24.* *25.* *26.* *27.* *28.* *29.* *30.* *31.* *32.* *33.* *34.* *35.* *36.* *37.* *38.* *39.* *40.* *41.* *42.* *43.* *44.* *45.* *46.* *47.* *48.* *49.* *50.* *51.* *52.* *53.* *54.* *55.* *56.* *57.* *58.* *59.* *60.* *61.* *62.* *63.* *64.* *65.* *66.* *67.* *68.* *69.* *70.* *71.* *72.* *73.* *74.* *75.* *76.* *77.* *78.* *79.* *80.* *81.* *82.* *83.* *84.* *85.* *86.* *87.* *88.* *89.* *90.* *91.* *92.* *93.* *94.* *95.* *96.* *97.* *98.* *99.* *100.* *101.* *102.* *103.* *104.* *105.* *106.* *107.* *108.* *109.* *110.* *111.* *112.* *113.* *114.* *115.* *116.* *117.* *118.* *119.* *120.* *121.* *122.* *123.* *124.* *125.* *126.* *127.* *128.* *129.* *130.* *131.* *132.* *133.* *134.* *135.* *136.* *137.* *138.* *139.* *140.* *141.* *142.* *143.* *144.* *145.* *146.* *147.* *148.* *149.* *150.* *151.* *152.* *153.* *154.* *155.* *156.* *157.* *158.* *159.* *160.* *161.* *162.* *163.* *164.* *165.* *166.* *167.* *168.* *169.* *170.* *171.* *172.* *173.* *174.* *175.* *176.* *177.* *178.* *179.* *180.* *181.* *182.* *183.* *184.* *185.* *186.* *187.* *188.* *189.* *190.* *191.* *192.* *193.* *194.* *195.* *196.* *197.* *198.* *199.* *200.* *201.* *202.* *203.* *204.* *205.* *206.* *207.* *208.* *209.* *210.* *211.* *212.* *213.* *214.* *215.* *216.* *217.* *218.* *219.* *220.* *221.* *222.* *223.* *224.* *225.* *226.* *227.* *228.* *229.* *230.* *231.* *232.* *233.* *234.* *235.* *236.* *237.* *238.* *239.* *240.* *241.* *242.* *243.* *244.* *245.* *246.* *247.* *248.* *249.* *250.* *251.* *252.* *253.* *254.* *255.* *256.* *257.* *258.* *259.* *260.* *261.* *262.* *263.* *264.* *265.* *266.* *267.* *268.* *269.* *270.* *271.* *272.* *273.* *274.* *275.* *276.* *277.* *278.* *279.* *280.* *281.* *282.* *283.* *284.* *285.* *286.* *287.* *288.* *289.* *290.* *291.* *292.* *293.* *294.* *295.* *296.* *297.* *298.* *299.* *300.* *301.* *302.* *303.* *304.* *305.* *306.* *307.* *308.* *309.* *310.* *311.* *312.*

multitudes of his followers, whom he enabled, when he was gone from them, to do the like, to speak strange languages before multitudes, to heal the sick and lame, and raise the dead. And usually false wonders are done but among friends, that would have it so, and are ready to believe; but Christ wrought his in the midst of enemies that gnashed the teeth, and had nothing to say against it. And I am persuaded that it was one reason why God would have Christ and all his followers have so many and cruel enemies, that when they had nothing to say against it, who doubtless would pry narrowly into all, and make the worst of it, it might tend to the establishing of believers afterwards. Again, usually false miracles, as they crept out in the dark, so they were not divulged till some after ages, and only a little muttered of at the present: but Christ and his apostles wrought and published them openly in the world. If the Gospel history had been false, how many thousand persons could have witnessed against it, seeing they appealed to thousands of witnesses then living, of several ranks and qualities, and countries? It is true, indeed, the magicians of Egypt did seem to go far. But consider whether they were mere delusions, or real wonders by secret, natural means; doubtless, they were no miracles directly so called. And lest any should say that God tempted them by such above their strength, you may observe that he doth not suffer Satan to do what he can do, without a sufficient counter testimony to undeceive men. When did God suffer the like deceit as those sorcerers used? Nor would he then have suffered it, but that Moses was at hand to overcome their delusions, and leave the beholders with full conviction, that so the enemies' strength might make the victory the more glorious. Balaam could not go beyond the word of the Lord. So that I desire all weak believers to observe this, That as God is the faithful Ruler of the world, so he will not let loose the enemy of mankind to tempt us by wonders, further than he himself shall give us a sufficient contradictory testimony. So that if we do not know the difference between a miracle and a wonder, yet God's faithfulness affords us a sufficient preservative, if we disregard it not. And if we should grant that Satan can work miracles; yet he being wholly at God's dispose, it is certain that God will not permit him to do it, without a full contradiction; and, therefore, such as Christ's miracles he shall never work. Else should the creature be remedilessly deluded by supernatural powers, while God looks on.

Secondly: But the main assault I know will be made against the minor proposition of the argument, and so the question will be, *de facto*, whether ever such miracles were wrought or not? I shall grant that we must not here argue circularly to prove the doctrine to be of God by the miracles, and then the miracles to have been wrought by the divine testimony of the doctrine, and so round. But yet, to use the testimony of the history of Scripture, as a human testimony of the matter of fact, is no circular arguing.

Sect. II. Toward the confirmation of the minor, therefore, I shall first lay these grounds: 1. That there is so much certainty in some human testimony, that may exclude all doubting, or cause of doubting;⁷ or there is some testimony immediately human, which yet may truly be said to be divine: 2. That such testimony we have of the² miracles mentioned in Scripture. If these two be cleared, the minor will stand firm, and the main work here will be done.

First: I will therefore show you, that there is such a certainty in some human testimony. Both experience and reason will confirm this. First, I would desire any rational man to tell me, whether he that never was at London, at Paris, or at Rome, may not be certain, by a human faith, that there are such cities? for my own part, I think it as certain to me, nay, more certain, than that which I see: and I should sooner question my own sight alone, than the eyes and credit of so many thousands in such a case. And I think the sceptic arguments brought against the certainty of sense, to be as strong as any that can be brought against the certainty of such a testimony. Is it not somewhat more than probable, think you, to the multitudes that never saw either parliament or king, that yet there is such an assembly, and such a person: may we not be fully certain that there was such a person as King James, as Queen Elizabeth, as Queen Mary, &c., here in England; yea, that there was such a

⁷ De certitudine Histor. lege Reignoldum 'De Lib. Apocr. Prælect.' 124—126. Respondeo, esse quandam famam, quæ tanti esse debet; tantæ, inquam, auctoritatis, ac si rem ipsam oculis usurpassemus. Camer. 'Prælect. de Verbo,' fol. p. 440. See there his full proof that these miracles of Christ and the disciples have such infallible testimony, and by what conditions certain fame may be known from uncertain.

² Fides humana non habet sua natura certitudinem infallibilem: quamvis sit fides humana, quæ moraliter loquendo, evidens et infallibilis censetur; ut quod Roma sit, quod Indi sint, &c.—Ames. in *Disput. de Fidei Divin. Veritat.* thes. 3.

man as William the Conqueror : may we not be certain, also, that he conquered England ; with many other of his actions ? The like may be said of Julius Cæsar, of Alexander the Great, &c.^a Surely, those who charge all human testimony with uncertainty, do hold their lands then upon an uncertain tenure.

Secondly : It may be proved, also, by reason ; for, 1. If the first testifiers may infallibly know it ; and, 2. Also by an infallible means transmit it to posterity ; and, 3. Have no intent to deceive ; then their testimony may be an infallible testimony. But all these three may easily be proved. I had thought to have laid down here the rules, by which a certain human testimony may be discerned from an uncertain ; but you may easily gather them from what I shall lay down for the confirmation of these three positions.

For the first, I suppose none will question, whether the testifiers might infallibly know the truth of what they testify ? If they should, let them consider : First, If it be not matter of doctrine, much less abstruse and difficult points, but only matter of fact, then it is beyond doubt it may be certainly known. Secondly, If it be those also who did see, and hear, and handle, who do testify it. Thirdly, If their senses were sound and perfect, within reach of the object, and having no deceiving medium. Fourthly, Which may be discerned, 1. If the witnesses be a multitude ; for then it may be known they are not blind or deaf, except they had been culled out of some hospitals ; especially when all present do both see and hear them : 2. When the thing is done openly, in the daylight : 3. When it is done frequently, and near at hand ; for then there would be full opportunity to discover any deceit. So that in these cases it is

^a Nothing commoner in Paul's Epistles than the mention of those miracles which were done among them and by themselves to whom he wrote. This had been stark madness, and not only folly in Paul, if he had lied. For he brought not arguments remote from their senses to whom he wrote, but he mentioneth those miracles which they themselves did work to whom he wrote ; yea, he provoked them to miracles, that from thence they might judge of his apostleship. There is no deceiver that dare do thus, especially if his deceit be called into question. We conclude, therefore, that the report of fame ought to be believed, the authors whereof have so commended the things reported to posterity, that they might easily be discovered by them that lived in those times.—*Camero in Prælect. de Verbo*, folio, p. 441. The reasons why no more mention is made of Christ's miracles by pagan writers, you may find in Camero 'De Verbo Dei,' p. 441, where he shows also, as the malice, so the gross ignorance of Suetonius, Tacitus, and the best of their writers, both in the Syrian affairs and in the matters of the Jewish and Christian religion, which caused their palpable, ridiculous errors.

doubtless, sense is infallible, and, consequently, those that see and hear, are most certain witnesses.

2. Next let us see, whether we may be certain that any testimony is sincere, without a purpose to deceive us. And I take that for undoubted in the following cases: 1. Where the party is ingenious and honest: 2. And it is apparent he drives on no design of his own, nor cannot expect any advantage in the world;^b 3. Nay, if his testimony will certainly undo him in the world, and prove the overthrow of his ease, honour, estate, and life. 4. And if it be a multitude that do thus testify, how can they do it with an intent to deceive? 5. And if their several testimonies do agree; 6. And if the very enemies deny not this matter of fact, but only refer it to other causes, then there is no possibility of deceit, as I shall further, anon, evince, when I apply it to the question: 7. And if no one of the witnesses in life, or at the hour of death, did ever repent of his testimony, and confess it a deceit; as certainly some one would have done for so great a sin, if it had been so.

Thirdly: We are to prove, that there are infallible means of transmitting such testimony down to posterity, without depraving any thing substantial. And then it will remain an undoubted truth, that there is a full certainty in some human testimony, and that to posterity at a remote distance.

Now, this tradition is infallible in these cases: 1. If it be (as before said) in matter of fact only, which the meanest understandings are capable of apprehending. 2. If it be also about the substance of actions, and not every small circumstance. 3. And also if those actions were famous in their

^b Quinam isti sint fortasse quæritis? gentes, populi, nationes, et incredulum illud genus humanum; quod nisi aperta res esset, et luce ipsa clarior, nunquam rebus hujusmodi credulitatis suæ commodarent assensum. An nunquid dicemus illius temporis homines, usque adeo fuisse vanos, mendaces, stolidos, brutos, ut quæ nunquam viderant? vidisse se fingerent? et quæ facta omnino non erant, falsis proderent testimoniis aut puerili assertione firmarent? Cumque possent vobiscum et unanimiter vivere, et inoffensas ducere conjunctiones, gratuita susciperent odia, et execrabili haberentur in nomine? —*Arnobius advers. Gentes*, lib. i. p. (mibi) 46. Nec dixerit aliquis opum assequendarum gratia eos id agere. Qui plerumque ne ad victum quidem necessaria capiunt. Et si forte aliquid præ rerum inopia capere quandoque coguntur, sola sunt necessitate contenti. Cum ingens hominum multitudo ad Christianam doctrinam accesserit, et prædivites quidam, et ex his aliqui qui gesserint magistratus, et matronæ insuper opulentæ et nobiles, audebit ne aliquis gloriæ cupiditate hos illosve suæ affirmare Christianæ religionis antistites fieri, &c.—*Origen. cont. Celsum*, lib. iii. fol. (mibi) 30.

times, and of great note and wonder in the world, and such as were the cause of public and eminent alterations. 4. If it be delivered down in writing, and not only by word of mouth, where the change of speech might alter the sense of the matter. 5. If the records be public, where the very enemies may see them; yea, published on purpose by heralds and ambassadors, that the world may take notice of them. 6. If they are men of greatest honesty in all ages, who have both kept and divulged these records. 7. And if there have been also a multitude of these. 8. And this multitude of several countries, where they could never so much as meet to agree upon any deceiving counsels: much less all accord in such a design; and, least of all, be able to manage it with secrecy. 9. If also the after-preservers and divulgers of these records could have no more self-advancing ends, than the first testifiers. 10. Nay, if their divulging and attesting these records, did utterly ruin their estates and lives, as well as it did the first testifiers. 11. If there be such a dispersing of the copies of these records all over the world, that the cancelling and abolishing them is a thing impossible. 12. If the very histories of the enemies never affirm any universal abolishing and consuming of them.^c 13. If all these dispersed copies through the world do perfectly agree in every thing material. 14. If it were a matter of such moment in the judgment of the preservers, neither to add nor diminish, that they thought their eternal salvation did lie upon it. 15. If the histories of their enemies do generally mention their attesting these records to the loss of their lives, and that successfully in every age. 16. If these records and attestations are yet visible to the world, and that in such a form as none could counterfeit. 17. If the enemies that lived near, or in those times when the things were done, do, 1. Write nothing against them of any moment.^d 2. But oppose them with fire and sword, instead of argument. 3. Nay,

^c I do confidently say, that for extrinsical testimonies contradicting these of the Scripture, there are none such at all to be found, unless you will take the sayings of such as were both born long after, and were professed enemies of the christian name.—*Grotius de Ver. Relig.* lib. iii. p. (mihi) 168. And it is a strong confirmation, when no man can produce one contradictory testimony of that age. De legis instauratione per Esdram, et an amissæ, an tantum corruptæ essent Scripturæ, lege Serrarii Prolegom. c. 12. q. 1. et quæ colligit Euseb. Nieremb. 'de Orig. S. Scrip.' lib. iv. c. 19.

^d Rabbini et alii.

if they acknowledge the fact, but deny the cause only.^e 18. And if all the enemies were incompetent witnesses. 1. Witnessing to the negative, of which they could have no certainty. 2. And carried on with apparent malice and prejudice. 3. And having all worldly advantages attending their cause. 4. And being generally men unconscionable and impious. 19. If all these enemies, having all these worldly advantages, could neither by arguments nor violence, hinder people from believing these famous and palpable matters of fact, in the very age wherein they were done, when the truth and falsehood might most easily be discovered, but that the generality of beholders were forced to assent. 20. If multitudes of the most ingenious and violent enemies, have in every age from the very acting of these things to this day, been forced to yield, and turned as zealous defenders of these records and their doctrine, as ever they were opposers of them before. 21. If all these converts do confess upon their coming in, that it was ignorance, or prejudice, or worldly respects, that made them oppose so much before. 22. If all the powers of the world, that can burn the bodies of the witnesses, that can overthrow kingdoms, and change their laws, could never yet reverse and abolish these records. 23. Nay, if some notable judgment in all ages, have befallen the most eminent opposers thereof. 24. And lastly, if successions of wonders (though not miracles as the first) have in all ages accompanied the attestation of these records. I say, if all these twenty-four particulars do concur, or most of these, I leave it to the judgment of any man of understanding, whether there be not an infallible way of transmitting matter of fact to posterity? And, consequently, whether there be not more than a probability, even a full certainty, in such a human testimony?

Sect. III. 2. The second thing which I am to manifest, is, that we have such a testimony of the miracles, which confirmed the doctrine and writings of the Bible.^f

And here I must run over the three foregoing particulars again; and show you, First, That the witnesses of scripture

^e Justin Martyr telleth Tryphon, in his Dialogue, of the wickedness of the Jews, that they sent out into all parts of the world their choicest men, to persuade the people against the Christians, that they are atheists, and would abolish the Deity; and that they were convicted of gross impiety. And yet this mischievous industry of the Jews did not prevail.

^f Episcopi communiter tunc habebant potestatem faciendi miracula, inquit Dionysius, 'Carthu. in Apocal.' c. 3.

miracles could, and did infallibly know the truth which they testified: Secondly, That they had no intent to deceive the world: and, Thirdly, That it hath been brought down to posterity by a way so infallible, that there remains no doubt whether our records are authentic. For the first of these, I think it will be most easily acknowledged. Men are naturally so confident of the infallibility of their own senses, that surely they will not suspect the senses of others. But if they should, let them have recourse to what is said before, to put them out of doubt. First, It was matter of fact, which might be easily discerned. Secondly, The apostles and others who bore witness to it were present, yea, continual companions of Christ, and the multitude of Christians were eye-witnesses of the miracles of the apostles.^g Thirdly, These were men neither blind nor deaf, but of as sound and perfect senses as we. Fourthly, This is apparent; 1. Because they were great multitudes, even that were present, and therefore could not all be blind; if they had, how did they walk about? Fifthly, These miracles were not done by night, nor in a corner, but in the open light, in the midst of the people. Sixthly, They were not once or twice only performed, but very oft, of several kinds, by several persons, even prophets, and Christ himself and his apostles, in many generations; so that, if there had been any deceit, it might have been easily discovered. Seventhly, and lastly, It was in the midst of vigilant

^g Beholding the creatures with astonishment, they saw all confessing Christ the Lord: they that had their cogitations intent on men, as if they had been gods, comparing Christ's works with theirs; they acknowledged that Christ only amongst men, was God, and the Son of God, and our Saviour, when they saw that there was no such works wrought by men, as were by the Word of God. They that had believed devils to be gods, seeing them overcome by Christ, they were constrained to confess him only to be God. They, whose minds went after the dead, as being accustomed to worship gallant men when they were dead, whom the poets called gods, being better taught by our Saviour's resurrection, they confessed them to be false and liars, and that the Word of the Father was the only true God, who had the command of death.—*Athanas. de Incarnat. Verbi.* Maxima est differentia inter, 1. Testificationem primitivæ ecclesiæ quæ fuit tempore apostolorum: 2. Inter testificationem ecclesiæ quæ proxime post apostolorum tempora secuta est, quæque primæ ecclesiæ testificationem acceperat: 3. Et inter testificationem præsentis ecclesiæ de Scriptura. Quæ enim et nunc et antea fuit ecclesia, si potest ostendere testimonia eorum qui acceperant et noverant testificationem primæ ecclesiæ de germanis scriptis, credimus ei, ut testi probanti sua dicta: non autem habet potestatem statuendi aut decernendi aliquid de libris sacris, cujus non possit certa documenta ex testificatione primitivæ ecclesiæ proferre.—*Chemnit. Exam. Conc. Tridentin.* part. 1. initio, p. 80. Quisquis adhuc prodigia, ut credat, inquirat, magnum est ipse prodigium, qui mundo credente, non credit.—*Dr. Humfredus in Jesuitism.* p. 166. *August.*

and subtle enemies, who were able and ready enough to have evinced the deceit.

So that it remains certain that the first eye-witnesses themselves were not deceived.

2. Let us next consider whether it be not, also, as certain that they never intended the deceiving of the world?

First: It is evident that they were neither fools nor knaves, but men of ingenuity, and extraordinary honesty; there needs no more to prove this, than their own writings, so full of enmity against all kind of vice, so full of conscientious zeal and heavenly affections. Yet is this their honesty also attested by their enemies. Surely the very remnants of natural honesty are a divine offspring, and do produce also certain effects according to their strength and nature. God hath planted and continued them in man, for the use of societies, and common converse; for if all honesty were gone, one man could not believe another, and so could not converse together. But now supernatural, extraordinary honesty, will produce its effect more certainly; if three hundred, or three thousand honest, godly men should say, they saw such things with their eyes, he is very incredulous that would not believe it.

Secondly: It is apparent that neither prophets, apostles, nor disciples, in attesting these things, could drive on any designs of their own.^h Did they seek their honour, or ease, or profit, or worldly delights? Did their Master give them any hopes of these? Or did they see any probability of their attaining it? Or did they see any of their fellows attain it before them?

^h Nemo jam infamiam incutiat: nemo aliud existimet: quia nec fas est ulli de sua religione mentiri. Ex eo enim quod aliud à se coli dicit, quam colit, et culturam, et honorem in alterum transfert: et transferendo jam non colit quod negavit. Dicimus, et palam dicimus, et vobis torquentibus lacerati et eruenti vociferamur, "Deum colimus per Christum," illum hominem putate: per eum, et in eo se cognosci vult Deus et coli.—*Tertullian. Apologet. c. 11.* Quod si falsa (ut dicitis) historia est illa rerum, unde tam brevi tempore totus mundus ista religione completus est? Asseverationibus allecti sunt nudis, inducti in spes cassas, et in pericula capitis immittere se sponte temeraria desperatione voluerunt? Cum nihil tale vidissent, quod eos in hos cultus novitatis suæ possit excitare miraculo? Immo quia hæc omnia ab ipso cernebant geri, et ab ejus præconibus qui per orbem totum missi beneficia patris et munera hominibus portabant; veritatis ipsius vi victi, dederunt sese Deo: nec in magnis posuere dispendiis membra vobis projicere, et viscera sua lanianda præbere.—*Arnobius advers. Gent. lib. i. p. 46.* Julian confesseth that those were the writings of Peter, Paul, Mark, Luke, which the Christians ascribed to them.

Thirdly : Nay, was it not a certain way to their ruin in the world ? Did not their Master tell them, when he sent them out, that they should be persecuted of all for his sake and the Gospel's ? Did they not find it true, and therefore expected the like themselves ? Paul knew, that in every city, bonds and afflictions did abide him. And they lay it down as a granted rule, that he that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution. Now I would fain know, whether a man's self, his estate, his liberty, his life, be not naturally so near and dear to all, that they would be loath to throw it away, merely to deceive and cozen the world ? All that I know can be objected is, that they may do it out of a desire to be admired in the world for their godliness, and their suffering.

Answ. 1. Go see where you can find thousands or millions of men that will cast away their lives to be talked of.

2. Did they not, on the contrary, renounce their own honour and esteem, and call themselves vile and miserable sinners, and speak worse of themselves than the most impious wretch will do, and extol nothing but God and his Son Jesus ?

3. Did not their Master foretell them, that they should be so far from getting credit by his service, that they should be hated of all men, and their names cast out as evil-doers ? Did they not see him spit upon, and hanged on a cross among thieves before their eyes, some of them ? Did they not find by experience, that their way was every where spoken against ? And the reproach of the cross of Christ was the great stumbling-block to the world ? And could men possibly choose such a way for vain-glory ? I am persuaded it is one great reason why Christ would have the first witnesses of the Gospel to suffer so much to confirm their testimony to future ages, that the world might see that they intended not to deceive them.

Fourthly : Consider, also, what a multitude these witnesses were.¹ How could so many thousands of several countries lay the plot to deceive the world ? They were not only thousands that believed the Gospel, but thousands that saw the miracles of Christ, and many cities and countries that saw the miracles of the apostles.

Fifthly : And the testimony of all doth so punctually accord, that the seeming contradiction in some smaller circumstances,

¹ In unam coire qui potuerunt mentem Gentes regionibus disjunctæ, ventis, cœli convexionibusque dimotæ ? &c.—*Arnob. ubi supra.*

doth but show their simplicity and sincerity, and their agreement in the main.;

Sixthly: And is it possible that no one of them would so much as at death, or in torments, have detected the deceit?

Seventhly and lastly: The very enemies acknowledge this matter of fact; ^k only they ascribe it to other causes. They could not deny the miracles that were wrought: even to this day the Jews acknowledge much of the works of Christ, but slanderously father them upon the power of the devil, or upon the force of the name of God sewed in Christ's thigh, and such-like ridiculous stories they have: even the Turks confess much of the miracles of Christ, and believe him to be a great Prophet, though they are professed enemies to the christian name.

So that I think by all this it is certain, that the first witnesses of the miracles of Christ and his apostles, as they were not deceived themselves, so neither had they any intent to deceive the world.

3. We are next to show you, that the way that this testimony hath come down to us, is a certain infallible way. For,^l

1. Consider, it is a matter of fact; (for the doctrine we are not now mentioning, except *de facto*, that this was the doctrine attested.)

2. They were the substances of the actions that they chiefly related, and that we are now inquiring after the certainty of. Though men may mistake in the circumstances of the fight at such a place, or such a place, yet that there were such fights we may certainly know. Or though they may mistake in smaller actions, circumstances, or qualifications, of Henry the Eighth,

^j Of the heathen ancient writers' attestations to the several histories of the Bible, I shall particularly say little, it being done so fully by Grotius 'De Ver. Christ. Rel.' lib. i. s. 16, 22. lib. ii. s. 7. lib. iii. s. 16. Tertul. de præscriptione affirmat ipsas authenticas apostolorum literas, hoc est ipsa scripta apostolorum suo adhuc tempore in ecclesiis apostolicis conservata extitisse.

^k Eodem momento dies, medium ordinem signante sole, subducta est. Deliquitum utique putaverunt, qui id quoque super Christo prædicatum nescierunt. Et tamen eum mundi casum relatum in archivis vestris habetis.—Tertul. Apol. c. 21.

^l Every sect that acknowledgeth God and Christ, hath those books as we have; and every sect using its testimony against the other, shows it was not falsified; for if it had, the adverse sect would have discovered it, as Grot. 'De Verit. Rel.' lib. iii. s. 15. Irenæus, Tertullian, Cyprian, Lactantius, and the rest of the eldest fathers, fully manifest, that the several books of the New Testament were then current and uncorrupt in the church; and allege abundance of places in the same words, as they are now in our Bibles, as Justin Martyr, Arnobius, Lactantius, Athenagoras, &c., do out of the Old.

of William the Conqueror, &c. ; yet that there were such men we may certainly know. Now the thing we inquire after is, whether such miracles were wrought, or not ?

3. They were actions then famous through the world,^m and made great alterations in states : they turned the world upside down : cities were converted, countries and rulers were turned Christians. And may not the records in eminent actions be certain ? We have certain records of battles, of sieges, of successions of princes among the heathens before the coming of Christ, and of the great alterations in our own state for a very long time.

4. It was a formal record^o in the very words of the first witnesses in writing, which hath been delivered to us, and not only any unwritten testimony ; so that men's various conceivings or expressions could make no alteration.

5. These records, which we call the Scripture, have been kept publicly in all these ages ; so that the most negligent enemy might have taken notice of its depravation. Yea, God made it the office of his ministers to publish it, whatever came of it, to all the world, and pronounced a wo to them if they preach not this Gospel ; which preaching was both the divulging of the doctrine and miracles of Christ, and all out of these authentic records. And how then is it possible there should be a universal depravation, and that even in the narration of the matters of fact, when all nations almost, in all these ages since the original of the history, have had these heralds who have proclaimed it to the death ?

^m The occasion of writing the several books of the New Testament, you may see in Chemnit. 'Exa. Concilii Trid.,' in the beginning.

^o Dico evangelium Lucæ quod tuemur apud ecclesias apostolicas, et jam universas ab initio editionis suæ stare.—*Tertul. adv. Marc.* Vide Sibrand. Jubert. 'De Principiis Christianorum Dogmatum,' l. 2. &c. Jam etiam quemadmodum diximus, et mortui resurrexerunt, et perseveraverunt nobiscum annis multis ; et quid autem ? Non est numerum dicere gratiarum, quas per universum mundum ecclesia à Deo accipiens, in nomine Christi per singulos dies in opitulationem gentium perficit, neque seducens aliquem, nec pecuniam ei auferens. Quemadmodum enim gratis accepit à Deo gratis administrat. Nec invocationibus angelicis faciat aliquid, nec incantationibus, nec aliqua prava curiositate. Sed munde et pure et manifeste orationes dirigentes ad Dominum qui omnia fecit, et nomen Domini nostri Jesu Christi invocans, virtutes secundum utilitates hominum, sed non ad seductionem perfecit. Si itaque et nunc nomen Domini nostri Jesu Christi beneficia præstat et curat firmissime, et vere omnes ubique credentes in eum, &c.—*Irenæus advers. Hereses*, lib. ii. c. 57. Evangelium adulterasse alios nullos præter Marcionistas quosdam hereticos norim, et Valentini sectatores, et eos forte qui à Lucano quodam prodierant.—*Origen, cont. Celsum*, lib. ii. fol. (mibi) 20.

6. And it is most apparent that the keepers and publishers of these records, have been men of most eminent piety and honesty. The same testimony which I gave before to prove the honesty of the first witnesses, will prove theirs, though in a lower degree: a good man, but a Christian, was the character given them by their very foes.

7. They have been a multitude, almost innumerable.

8. And these of almost every country under heaven. And let any man tell me how all these, or the chief of them, could possibly meet, to consult about the depraving of the history of the Scripture? And whether it were possible, if such a multitude were so ridiculously dishonest, yet that they could carry on such a vain design with secrecy and success.^p

9. Also, the after-divulgers of the miracles of the Gospel, could have no more self-advancing ends for a long time than the first witnesses.

10. Nay, it ruined them in the world, as it did the first, so that let any man judge whether there be any possibility that so many millions of so many nations should ruin themselves, and give their bodies to be burned, merely to deprave those Scriptures which they do profess?

11. Consider, also, when this sacred history was so dispersed over the world, whether the cancelling and extirpation of it were not a thing impossible, especially by those means that were attempted?^q

12. Nay, there is no history of the enemies that doth mention

^o Even among the papists, the more learned and modest maintain the perfection of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, as Arias, Pagninus, Vatablus, Cajetan. *Quid est gens Judæorum nisi quædam scriniaria Christianorum hajulans legem et prophetas in testimonium assertionis ecclesiæ?*—*Aug. cont. Faust. Manichæum*, lib. xii. c. 23.

^p There were some of the first copies kept till two hundred years after: and a book that was so dispersed in so many copies, and kept not by private men, but by the public diligence of the church, could not be falsified. Moreover, in the very first ages it was translated into the Syriac, the Ethiopic, the Arabic, and Latin tongues; which translations are all yet extant, and in nothing of any moment differ from the Greek books. Besides, we have the writings of those that were instructed by the apostles themselves, or their disciples, who cite abundance of places out of the Scriptures in the same sense as we read them now. Nor was there any man then of such authority in the church, as that they who have obeyed him if he had changed any thing, as Irenæus's, Tertullian's, Cyprian's free dissent from those who were then most eminent, doth show. Next to these times there succeeded men of great learning and judgment, who, after diligent search, did receive these books as remaining in their primitive purity.—*Grotius de Verit. Relig.* lib. iii. sect. 15.

any universal abolition or depravation of these records. When was the time, and where was the place, that all the Bibles in the world were gathered together, and consumed with fire, or corrupted with forgery?^r Indeed, Julian thought by prohibiting the schools of learning to the children of Christians, to have extirpated Christianity; but Christ did quickly first extirpate him.

13. All those copies of those sacred writings do yet accord, in all things material, which are found through the world. And consider them if they had been depraved, whether multitudes of copies, which had escaped that depravation, would not by their diversity, or contradiction, have bewrayed the rest?

14. It was a matter of such a heinous quality, both by the sentence of the law, and in the consciences of the preservers and divulgers of it, to add or diminish the least tittle, that they thought it deserved eternal damnation. And I refer it to any man of reason, whether so many thousands of men through the world, could possibly venture upon eternal torment, as well as upon temporal death; and all this to deceive others, by depraving the laws which they look to be judged by; or the history of those miracles which were the grounds of our faith? Is not the contrary somewhat more than probable?

15. Furthermore, the histories of the enemies do frequently mention that these Scriptures have been still maintained to the flames. Though they revile the Christians, yet they report this their attestation, which proves the constant succession thereof, and the faithful delivery of Christianity and its records to us. It would be but needless labour to heap up here the several reports of pagan historians, of the numbers of Christians, their obstinacy in their religion, their calamities and torments.

16. These records and their attestations are yet visible over the world, and that in such a form as cannot possibly be counterfeited. Is it not enough to put me out of doubt, whether Homer ever wrote his Iliads, or Demosthenes his Orations, or Virgil

^r Antiochus did what he could, but left the Jews their Scripture entire in despite of him. Nam cum tot secula intercesserint, nemo tamen quicquam addere vel auferre vel permutare ausus fuit: omnibus enim nostræ gentis hominibus insita quodammodo atque ingenita fides est, credere hæc Dei esse consulta, et his acquiescere, ac pro ipsis, si ita res posceret, libenter animam ponere.—*Joseph. cont. Appian.* lib. i. Sic et Euseb. *Eccles. Hist.* lib. iii. c. 10. Ita Philo, referente Eusebio, 'Præparat. Evang.' lib. viii. c. 2. Mirabile mihi videtur duobus annorum millibus, imo majore tempore jam fere transacto, nec verbum unum in lege illius esse immutatum, sed centies unusquisque Judæorum prius moriatur; quam legi Mosaicæ derogabit.

and Ovid their several works, or Aristotle his volumes of so many of the sciences, when I see and read these books yet extant; and when I find them such, that I think can hardly now be counterfeited, no, nor imitated? But if they could, who would have been at the excessive pains, as to have spent his life in compiling such books, that he might deceive the world, and make men believe that they were the works of Aristotle, Ovid, &c.; would not any man rather have taken the honour to himself? so here the case is alike Yea, the Scriptures, though they have less of arts and sciences, yet are incomparably more difficult to have been counterfeited than the other; I mean before the first copies were drawn. I would here stay to show the utter impossibility of any man's forging these writings; but that I intend to make that a peculiar argument.

17. Whether any enemy hath, with weight of argument, confuted the christian cause; whether, when they have undertaken it, it hath not been only arguing the improbability,^r or assigning the miracles to other causes, or an opposing the doctrine delivered by the Christians,^s rather than these miraculous actions in question; I leave those to judge who have read their writings; yea, whether their common arguments have not been fire and sword.

18. It is an easy matter yet to prove, that the enemies of Scripture have been incompetent witnesses; 1. Being men that were not present, or had not the opportunity to be so well ac-

^r They think the Scripture miracles incredible; and yet every age still hath such wonders as the next ages will not believe. Why is not the raining of manna or quails from heaven as credible as the raining of that grain about ten years ago in England? It fell in many parts of the kingdom. It was like a withered wheat corn, but not so long, with a skin of a dark colour, which being pulled off, the grain had a taste somewhat sharp and hot. I tasted it, and kept some of it long, which fell on the leads of the church, and of the minister's house in Bridgnorth, where I preached the Gospel: and within this year I have seen grain that hath fallen twice since; of which the latter seemed the same with the first above-mentioned; but the other was of a different sort. Jan. 1661. Tiberius, upon a letter from Pilate of the miracles, death, and resurrection of Christ, did move in the senate to proclaim him to be God; but they refused, because the motion was not first from themselves: but the emperor did abide in his opinion still.—*Egesip. Anacephal.* Wherefore Tertullian bids them, "Go look in your registers, and the acts of your senate," in 'Apol.' Vide Usher, 'Brit. Eccl. Prim.' p. 3, 4.

^s Not being able to resist such open truths, or say any thing against them, they will not deny what is written, but say they yet expect these things, and that the word is not yet come.—*Athanas. de Incarn. Verbi.* Malunt nescire, quia jam oderunt: adeo quod nesciunt, præjudicant id esse, quod si sciant, odisse non poterant.—*Tertul. Apol.* 1.

quainted with the actions of Christ, of the prophets and apostles, as themselves or others, that do attest them. 2. Being men of apparent malice, and possessed with much prejudice against the persons and things which they oppose. This I might easily and fully prove, if I could stand upon it. 3. They had all worldly advantages attending their cause, which they were all to lose, with life itself, if they had appeared for Christ. 4. They were generally men of no great conscience, nor moral honesty; and most of them of most sensual and vicious conversation. This appears by their own writings, both doctrinal and historical.^t What sensual interpretations of the law did the very strict sect of the pharisees make! What fleshly laws have the followers of Mahomet! What vices did the laws of the heathens tolerate! Yea, what foul errors are in the ethics of their most rigid moralists! And you may be sure that their lives were far worse than their laws; and, indeed, their own histories do acknowledge as much. To save me the labour of mentioning them, read Dr. Hackwell's apology on that subject. Surely such men are incompetent witnesses in any cause between man and man, and would be so judged at any impartial judicature. And, indeed, how is it possible that they should be much better, when they have no laws that teach them either what true happiness is, or what is the way and means to attain it? 5. Besides all this, their testimony was only of the negative, and that in such cases as it could not be valid.

19. Consider, also, that all the adversaries of these miracles and relations could not, with all their arguments or violence, hinder thousands from believing them, in the very time and country where they were done: but that they who did behold them, did generally assent at least to the matter of fact; so that we may say with Austin, either they were miracles or not: if they were, why do you not believe? if they were not, behold the greatest miracle of all, that so many thousands, even of the beholders, should be so blind, as to believe things that never were, especially in those very times when it was the easiest matter in the world to have disproved such falsehoods. If there

^t Of the general wickedness of the Romans themselves, and all heathen enemies to Christ, the testimonies are too large here to be inserted. You may find enough in Just. Martyr's 'Dialog. cum Triph.' and 'Apologies,' &c. In Tertullian's 'Apol.' et passim; in Origen. 'Cont. Celsum;' Arnobius 'Advers. Gent.;' Lactantius's 'Institutions;' Athenagoras, Tatianus, Minutius Fælix, 'Advers. Gentil.;' Athanas. passim, Irenæus, Clemens Alexandrinus, passim; and all the writers of those times.

should go a report now of a man at London, that should raise the dead, cure the blind, the deaf, the sick, the possessed, feed thousands with five loaves, &c. ; and that a multitude of his followers should do the like, and that a great many times over and over, and that in the several parts of the land, in the presence of crowds, and thousands of people. I pray you, judge whether it were not the easiest matter in the world to disprove this, if it were false ; and whether it were possible that whole countries and cities should believe it ? Nay, whether the easiness and certainty of disproving it, would not bring them all into extreme contempt ?

Two things will be here objected : first, that then the adversaries not believing, will be as strong against it, as the disciples believing is for it. Answ. Read what is said before of the adversary's incompetency, and it may satisfy as to this. Secondly, Consider, also, that the generality of the adversaries did believe the matter of fact, which is all that we are now inquiring after.^u The recital here of those multitudes of testimonies that might be produced from antiquity, is a work that my strait time doth prohibit, but is done by others far more able. Only that well-known passage in Josephus I will here set down : " In the time of Tiberius, there was one Jesus, a wise man, at least, if he was to be called a man, who was a worker of great miracles, and a teacher of such who love the truth, and had many, as well Jews as gentiles, who clave unto him. This was Christ. And when Pilate, upon his being accused by the men of our nation, had sentenced him to be crucified, yet did they not who had first loved him forsake him : for he appeared to them the third day alive again, according to what the prophets, divinely

^u Julian, when he scorneth Christ, doth acknowledge his miracles. " What," saith he, " hath this Jesus done worthy of memory, or of any account, in all his life, save that he cured a few blind, and lame, and delivered some from devils that possessed them?" &c. Hic est qui stellam signare fecit nativitatem, &c. In Judea natum ex Perside supplices adorare venerunt viri.—*Athanas. de Incarn. Verbi*. Ea omnia super Christo Pilatus, et ipse jam pro sua conscientia Christianus, Cæsari tum Tiberio nunciavit ; sed et Cæsares credidissent super Christo, si aut Cæsares non essent seculo necessarii ; aut si et Christiani potuissent esse Cæsares.—*Tertul. Apol. c. xxi*. Of the sun darkened in Tiberius's time, when Jesus was crucified, and of the earthquake, Phlegon hath written in the thirteenth or fourteenth book, ' De Temporibus,' saith Origen ' Cont. Celsum,' lib. ii. fol. (mih) 21. The star that appeared at Christ's birth is mentioned by Pliny, lib. ii. c. 25. So do divers others, as Origen reports, ' Cont. Celsum.' Herod's killing the children is mentioned in Augustus's taunt : " I had rather," saith he, " be Herod's swine than his son, because he killed a son of his own among the rest."—*Macrob. Saturnal.*

inspired, had foretold concerning him, as they had done an innumerable number of very strange things besides. And even to this day, both the name and sort of persons called Christians, so named from him, do remain." Thus far Josephus, a Jew by nation and religion, who wrote this about eighty-six years after Christ, and fourteen years before the death of St. John, himself being born about five or six years after Christ.

20. Consider, also, how that every age hath offered multitudes of witnesses, who before were most bitter and violent enemies, and divers of those men of note for learning and place in the world.^x How mad was Saul against the truth! Surely it could be no favour to the cause, nor overmuch credulity, that caused such men to witness to the death, the truth of that for which they had persecuted others to the death but a little before. Nor could childish fables, or common flying tales, have so mightily wrought with men of learning and understanding: for some such were Christians in all ages.

21. Nay, observe but the confessions of these adversaries, when they came to believe: how generally and ingenuously they acknowledge their former ignorance and prejudice to have been the cause of their unbelief.

22. Consider, also, how unable all the enemies of the Gospel have been to abolish these sacred records. They could burn those witnesses by thousands, but yet they could never either hinder their succession, or extinguish their testimonies.

23. Nay, the most eminent adversaries have had the most eminent ruin: as Antiochus, Herod, Julian, with multitudes more. This stone having fallen upon them, hath ground them to powder.

^x Josephus relates the life of John the Baptist as the evangelists do. The darkness and earthquake at Christ's death is acknowledged by Phlegon, in lib. Chron. xiii. Lucian bids his tormentors search their own chronicles, and they should find that in Pilate's time the light failed in the midst of the day, and the sun was darkened while Christ was suffering. Tertullian also appealeth to their own chronicles, 'Apol.' And that it was no natural eclipse is known to astronomers. See Marcilius Ficinus of the star. The death of Herod is set out by Josephus, 'Antiq.' lib. xix. c. 7. as by Luke. Irenæus affirmeth, that in his time the working of miracles, the raising of the dead, the casting out of devils, healing the sick by mere laying on of hands, and prophesying, were still in force; and that some that were so raised from the dead remained alive among them long after. See Niceph. 'Eccles. Histor.' tom. 1. lib. iv. c. 23. And Justin Martyr saith that the gift of prophesying was famous in the church in his time, 'Dialog. ad Tryph.' And Cyprian and Tertullian mention the ordinary casting out of devils, and challenge the heathen to come and see it.

24. It were not difficult here to collect from unquestioned authors, a constant succession of wonders, at least, to have in several ages accompanied the attestation of this truth; and notable judgments that have befallen the persecutors of it. And though the papists, by their fictions and fabulous legends, have done more wrong to the christian cause, than ever they are able to repair; yet unquestionable history doth afford us very many examples: and even many of those actions which they have deformed with their fabulous additions, might yet for the substance have much truth: and God might, even in the times of popery, work some of these wonders, though not to confirm their religion, as it was popish, yet to confirm it as it was christian; for, as he had then his church, and then his Scripture, so had he then his special providences to confirm his church in their belief, and to silence the several enemies of the faith. And therefore I advise those who, in their inconsiderate zeal, are apt to reject all these histories of Providence, merely because they were written by papists, or because some witnesses to the truth were a little leavened with some popish errors, that they would first view them, and consider of their probability of truth or falsehood, that so they may pick out the truth, and not reject all together in the lump; otherwise, in their zeal against popery, they should injure Christianity.

And now I leave any man to judge, whether we have not had an infallible way of receiving these records from the first witnesses?

Not that every of the particulars before mentioned, are necessary to the proving our certain receiving the authentic records without depravation; for you may perceive, that almost any two or three of them might suffice; and that divers of them are from abundance for fuller confirmation.

Sect. IV. And thus I have done with this first argument, drawn from the miracles which prove the doctrines and writings to be of God. But I must satisfy the scruples of some before I proceed. First, Some will question, whether this be not, 1. To resolve our faith into the testimony of man: 2. And so make it a human faith: and so, 3. To jump in this with the papists, who believe the Scripture for the authority of the church, and to argue circularly in this, as they. To this I answer:

First: I make in this argument the resolution of my faith into the miracles wrought, as testimonies divine to confirm

the doctrine.⁷ If you ask, why I believe the doctrine to be of God? I answer, because it was confirmed by many undeniable miracles. If you ask, why I believe those miracles to be from God? I answer, because no created power can work a miracle: so that the testimony of man is not the reason of my believing; but only the means by which this matter of fact is brought down to my knowledge. Again, our faith cannot be said to be resolved into that which we give in answer to your last interrogation, except your question be only still of the proper grounds of faith. But if you change your question, from What is the ground of my faith? to What is the means of conveying down the history to me? then my faith is not resolved into this means. Yet this means, or some other equivalent, I acknowledge so necessary, that without it, I had never been like to have believed. 2. This shows you also that I argue not in the popish circle, nor take my faith on their common grounds. For, first, when you ask them, How know you the testimony of the church to be infallible? they prove it again by Scripture; and there is their circle. But as I trust not on the authority of the Romish church only, as they do; no, nor properly to the authority of any church; no, nor only to the testimony of the church, but also to the testimony of the enemies themselves: so do I prove the validity of the testimony I bring from nature, and well-known principles in reason, and not from Scripture itself, as you may see before. 3. There is a human testimony, which is also divine; and so a human faith, which is also in some sort divine. Few of God's extraordinary revelations have been immediate; the best schoolmen think none at all;^a but either by angels, or by Jesus himself, who was man as well as God. You will acknowledge if God reveal it to an angel, and the angel to Moses, and Moses to Israel, this is a

⁷ Non fidem quæ verbis Dei habetur, etsi non prorsus nasci ex miraculis, attamen ex eis confirmari possumus credere.—*Pet. Mart. Loc. Commun.* c. 8. p. 38. Vide plura ibid. Lege Whitak. Duplicat. adv. Stapleton. De Sac. Script. lib. i. c. 3. pp. 55—57, &c., plenissime de hoc disserent. Sic c. 4. p. 62, et c. 5 et 6, de quatuor officiis ecclesiæ circa Scriptur. viz. ut sit tabellio vel registrarius. 2. Vindex qui veras Script. à falsis vindicet. 3. Præco, qui Script. promulget et divulget. 4. Interpres. Vide etiam lib. ii. c. 5. pp. 332—334, &c. Et triplex officium ecclesiæ dat Polanus Syntag. lib. i. c. 28.

² Non per alios dispositionem salutis nostræ cognovimus, quam per eos per quos evangelicum pervenit ad nos; quod quidem tunc præconiaverunt, postea vero per Dei voluntatem in Scripturis nobis tradiderunt. fundamentum et columnam fidei nostræ futurum.—*Iren. adv. Hær.* lib. iii. c. 1.

^a Aquin. Sum. 3. q. 55. c. 2.

divine revelation to Israel. For that is called a divine revelation, which we are certain that God doth any way reveal. Now, I would fain know, why that which God doth naturally and certainly reveal to all men, may not as properly be called a divine revelation,^b as that which he reveals by the Spirit to a few. Is not this truth from God, that the senses' apprehension of their object, rightly stated, is certain, as well as this, "Jesus Christ was born of a Virgin?" &c. Though a saint or an angel be a fitter messenger to reveal the things of the Spirit, yet any man may be a messenger to reveal the things of the flesh. An ungodly man, if he have better eyes and ears, may be a better messenger or witness of that matter of fact which he seeth and heareth, than a more godly man that is blind or deaf, especially in cases wherein that ungodly man hath no provocation to speak falsely; and, most of all, if his testimony be against himself. I take that relation, whereby I know that there was a fight at York, &c., to be of God, though wicked men were the witnesses. For I take it for an undeniable maxim, that there is no truth but of God, only it is derived unto us by various means.

Sect. V. 2. And as I have evidently discovered the full certainty of this testimony of man, concerning the forementioned matter of fact; so I will show you why I choose this for my first and main argument; and also that no man can believe without the foresaid human testimony. First, then, I demand with myself, by what argument did Moses and Christ evince to the world the verity of their doctrine? and I find it was chiefly by this of miracles; and, surely, Christ knew the best argument to prove the divine authority to his doctrine; and that which was the best then, is the best still. If ourselves had lived in the days of Christ, should we have believed a poor man to have been God, the Saviour, the Judge of the world, without miracles to prove this to us; nay, would it have been our duty to have believed? doth not Christ say, "If I had not done the works that no man else can do, ye had not had sin?" that is, your not believing me to be the Messias had been no sin: for

^b Though I know it is only a testimony, or revelation without evidence, ex parte rei, that makes truth the object of faith, in a strict sense; yet that which is revealed to reason and sense in its own evidence, is also certain objectively, and more certain sometimes, certitudine subjecti, as Hooker against Mr. Travers. *Sacra Scriptura quam apud homines nondum Spiritu Dei, et vera fide donatos habet auctoritatem, propter quam ab illis incipit admitti, et audiri tanquam verbum Dei, habet ab ecclesiæ testimonio.*—*Polan. Synt.* lib. iii. c. 28.

no man is bound to believe that which was never convincingly revealed.

And I think that this is it which is called the sin against the Holy Ghost,^c when men will not be convinced by miracles, that Jesus is the Christ. That which some divines judge to be the sin against the Holy Ghost, and opposing the known truth only out of malice against it, it is a question whether human nature be capable of. And whether all human opposition to truth be not through ignorance, or prevalency of the sensual lusts : and so all malice against truth, is only against it as conceived to be falsehood, or else as it appeareth an enemy to our sensual desires : else, how doth man's understanding, as it is an understanding, naturally choose truth, either real or appearing, for its object ? so that, I think, none can be guilty of malice against truth, as truth ; and to be at enmity with truth for opposing our sensuality, is a sin that every man in the world hath been, in some measure, guilty of. And, indeed, our divines do so define the sin against the Holy Ghost, that I could never yet understand by their definition what it might be : some placing it in an act incompatible with the rational soul, and others making it but gradually to differ from other sins,^d which hath cast so many into terror of soul, because they could never find out that gradual difference.

The sense of the place, which the whole context, if you view it deliberately, will show, seems to me to be this : as if Christ had said, While you believed not the testimony of the prophets, yet there was hope ; the testimony of John Baptist might have convinced you ; yea, when you believed not John, yet you

^c I confess I kept silent this opinion and exposition some years, because I knew no man that did hold it ; and I am afraid of rash adventuring on novelty, though resolved not to reject any revealed truth. But since, I find great Athanasius hath written a tractate on the sin against the Holy Ghost, maintaining the very same exposition which I here give, (or with very small difference : though I assent not to his application in the end of all to the Arians ;) which being from one of so great authority, and explaining it more fully than I might do in this short digression, I desire the learned, who rejected my exposition, to peruse it ; where also you may find his confutation of the subtle, but unsound opinion of Origen about this sin, as also of the opinion of Theognostus, though I know some do question that book, but on weak grounds. See my discourse of the sin against the Holy Ghost, in my third part of the 'Unreasonableness of Infidelity.'

^d How Hunnius was assaulted with this temptation, "that he sinned against the Holy Ghost," you may read in his life and death : and it is still a common temptation. Matt. xii. 24, &c. ; Mark iii. 28 ; John v. 39, 43, 45—47 ; John xv. 22, 24.

might have been convinced by my own doctrine : yea , though you did not believe my doctrine, yet there was hope you might have been convinced by my miracles.^e But when you accuse them to be the works of Beelzebub, and ascribe the work of the divine Power, or Spirit, to the prince of devils, what more hope ? I will, after my ascension, send the Holy Ghost upon my disciples, that they may work miracles to convince the world, that they who will believe no other testimony, may yet, through this, believe : but if you sin against this Holy Ghost, that is, if they will not believe for all these miracles, for the Scripture frequently calls faith by the name of obedience, and unbelief by the name of sin, there is no other more convincing testimony left, and so their sin of unbelief is incurable, and consequently unpardonable : and therefore he that speaketh against the Son of Man, that is, denieth his testimony of himself, it shall be forgiven him, if he yet believe this testimony of the Spirit, but they that continue unbelievers for all this, and so reproach the testimony that should convince them, as you do, shall never be forgiven, because they cannot perform the condition of forgiveness.

This I think to be the sense of the text ; and the rather, when I consider, what sin it was that these pharisees committed ; for surely that which is commonly judged to be the sin against the Holy Ghost, I nowhere find that Christ doth accuse them of ; but the Scripture seemeth to speak on the contrary, “ that through ignorance they did it ;” (Acts iii. 17 ;) “ for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory.” (1 Cor. ii. 8.) And, indeed, it is a thing to me altogether incredible, that these pharisees should know Christ to be the Messiah, whom they so desirously expected, and to be the Son of God, and Judge of all men, and yet to crucify him through mere malice ; charge them not with this, till you can show some scripture that charged them with it.

Object. Why, then, there is no sin against the Holy Ghost, now miracles are ceased ?

Ans. Yes :^f though the miracles are ceased, yet their tes-

^e Deus ad confirmandum ea quæ naturalem cognitionem excedunt, opera visibiliter ostendit, quæ totius naturæ superant facultatem : ut patet in mirabili curatione languorum, mortuorum suscitatione, cœlestium corporum mirabili mutatione ; et quod est mirabili humanarum mentium inspiratione, ut idiotæ simplices dono Spiritus Sancti repleti, summam sapientiam et facundiam in instanti consequerentur.—*Aquin. cont. Gentil.* lib. i. c. 6.

^f Ex vetustissima antiquitate prodiit veritas Dei, quænam sit vera religio.

timony doth still live;^g the death and resurrection of Christ are past, and yet men may sin against the death and resurrection. So that, I think, when men will not believe that Jesus is the Christ, though they are convinced by undeniable arguments, of the miracles which both himself and his disciples wrought; this is now the sin against the Holy Ghost. And, therefore, take heed of slighting this argument.

Sect. VI. 2. And here would I have those men, who cannot endure this resting upon human testimony,^h to consider of what necessity it is for the producing of our faith. Something must be taken upon trust from man, whether they will or not: and yet no uncertainty in our faith neither. 1. The mere illiterate man must take it upon trust, that the book is a Bible which he hears read; for else, he knows not but it may be some other book: 2. That those words are in it, which the reader pronounceth: 3. That it is translated truly out of the original languages: 4. That the Hebrew and Greek copies, out of which it was translated, are true, authentic copies: 5. That it was originally written in these languages: 6. Yea, and the meaning of divers scripture passages, which cannot be understood without the knowledge of Jewish customs of chronology, of geography, &c., though the words were ever so exactly translated. All these, with many more, the vulgar must take upon the word of their teachers; and, indeed, a faith merely human, is a necessary preparative to a faith divine, in respect of some means, and *præcognita* necessary thereto. If a scholar will not take his master's word that such letters have such or such a power, or do spell so or so; or that such a Latin or Greek word hath such a

Cui confirmandæ Deus miranda testimonia addidit, quæ essent velut perpetua quædam et authentica sigilla veritatis diviniæ.—*Hemming. in Præfat. ante Postil.*

^g Nunc non ut olim sunt necessaria miracula; priusquam crederet mundus, necessaria fuere ad hoc ut mundus crederet, ut 'Aug. de Civ. Dei,' lib. xxii. c. 8.

^h Yet do I believe that that of 2 Pet. i. 20. is generally mistaken; as if the apostle did deny private men the liberty of interpreting Scriptures, even for themselves; when it is in regard of the object, and not of the interpreter, that the apostle calleth it "private;" as if he should say the prophets are a sure testimony of the doctrine of Christianity: but then you must understand that they are not to be interpreted of the private men that spoke them; for they were but types of Christ the public person; so Psal. ii., and xvi., &c. are to be interpreted of Christ, and not of David only, a private person, and but a type of Christ in all; as Philip answereth the question of the eunuch in Acts viii. Of whom doth the prophet speak: of himself, privately, or some other more public man? This is, I think, the true meaning of Philip.

signification; when will he learn, or how will he know? Nay how do the most learned linguists know the signification of words in any language, and so in the Hebrew or Greek Scriptures, but only upon the credit of their teachers and authors? and yet certain enough too in the main. Tradition is not so useless to the world or the church as some would have it. Though the papists do sinfully plead it against the sufficiency of Scripture, yet scripture sufficiency or perfection is only *in suo genere*, in its own kind, not *in omni genere*, not sufficient for every purpose. Scripture is a sufficient rule of faith and life; but not a sufficient means of conveying itself to all generations and persons.ⁱ If human testimony had not been necessary, why should Christ have men to be witnesses in the beginning; and also still instruments of persuading others, and attesting the verity of these sacred records to those that cannot otherwise come to know them?

And, doubtless, this is the chief^k use of ministers in the church,^l and the great end of God in the stating and continuing their function; that what men are incapable of believing, explicitly, with a faith properly divine, that they might receive implicitly, and upon the word of their teachers with a human faith.

ⁱ I wish the papists would read Cyprian, 7. Epist. ad Pompeium, against tradition and their pope's supremacy; and Clem. Alex. saith the apostles' teaching ended in Nero's time. But, after that, about Adrian's time, those that devised heresies arose, as Basilides, who said Glaucia was his master, who was Peter's interpreter: so Valentine, they say, heard Theodate, who was Paul's familiar; and Marcion, being born in the same age, was conversant with them, as an old man with the younger: after whom he awhile heard Simon Peter preach; which being so, it is clear that these latter churches are innovated from the ancient true church, being heresies of adulterine note.—*Stromata*, lib. vii. fine. You see heretics pretended tradition, and what church Clement turns us to!

^k Oportet discentem credere.—*Aristot. in Analytic. post.* Titus i. 7; 1 Cor. i. 4; xii. 24, and xvii. 21; Luke xii. 42; Heb. xiii. 3, 17, 24; 1 Tim. iii. 5; Acts xx. 28; 1 Tim. iii. 4, 5; 1 Pet. v. 2; 1 Cor. iv. 15.

^l If the revilers of the ministers of Christ, with whom this vicious age aboundeth, did know what power ministers had, both in the apostles' times, and many hundred years after, and what strict discipline was used, as they may see in holy Cyprian among others, they would not for shame charge us with tyranny and proud domination. It is wonderful that religion then had that awe and power on men's consciences, that they would make men stoop to public confessions and penitential lamentations, at the censure of the church guides, even when the censures were rigid, and when the magistrates did not second them, yea, when it was a hazard to their lives to be known Christians. And yet now Christianity is in credit, even those that seem religious, do judge Christ's discipline to be tyranny, and subjection to it to be intolerable slavery.

Every man should labour indeed to see with his own eyes, and to know all that God hath revealed, and to be wiser than his teachers: but every man cannot bestow that time and pains in the study of languages and sciences; without which that knowledge is not now attained. We may rather wish than hope, 'that all the Lord's people were prophets.' The church of Christ hath been long in a very doleful plight betwixt these two extremes, taking all things upon trust from our teachers, and taking nothing upon trust: and yet those very men who so disclaim taking upon trust, do themselves take as much upon trust as others.

Why else are ministers called the eyes and the hands of the body; stewards of the mysteries, and of the house of God; overseers, rulers, and governors of the church; and such as must give the children their meat in due season; fathers of their people? &c. Surely, they clearly know truth and duty must be received from any one, though but a child; and known error and iniquity must be received from none, though an angel from heaven. What, then, is that we are so often required to obey our teaching rulers in? Surely, it is not so much in the receiving of new-instituted ceremonies from them, which they call things indifferent: but, as in all professions, the scholar must take his master's word in learning, till he can grow up to know the things in their own evidence; and as men will take the words of any artificers in the matters that concern their own trade;^m and as every wise patient will trust the judgment of his physician, except he know as much himself; and the client will take the word of his lawyer: so also Christ hath ordered that the more strong and knowing should be teachers in his school, and the young and ignorant should believe them and obey them, till they can reach to understand the things themselves. So that the matters which we must receive upon trust from our teachers, are those which we cannot reach to know ourselves, and therefore must either take them upon the word of others, or not receive them at all: so that, if these

^m Hæc duo dictat ipsa ratio; primo, in mysteriis quæ superant rationem, non nitendum esse ratiocinantis logicâ, sed revelantis autoritate. Secundo, in consequentiis deducendis aut obscuris in religione interpretandis, magis fidendum esse cœtui in nomine Domini legitime congregato, quam privatis spiritibus, seorsim sapientibus, recalcitrantibus.—*Dr. Prideaux*, lect. xxii.; *De Auth. Eccl.* p. 361. See *Dr. Jackson's 'Eternal Truth of Scriptures,'* lib. ii. c. 1—6.

rulers and stewards do require us to believe, when we know not ourselves whether it be truth or not; or if they require us to obey, when we know not ourselves whether it be a duty commanded by God or not; here it is that we ought to obey them. For though we know not whether God hath revealed such a point, or commanded such an action, yet that he hath commanded us to obey them that rule over us, who preach to us the word of God, this we certainly know. (Heb. xiii. 7.) Yet I think we are not so strictly tied to the judgment of a weak minister of our own, as to take his word before another's, that is more judicious in a neighbour congregation. Nor do I think, if we see but an appearance of his erring, that we should carelessly go on in believing and obeying him without a diligent searching after the truth: even a likelihood of his mistake must quicken us to further inquiry, and may, during that inquiry, suspend our belief and obedience. For where we are able to reach to know probabilities in divine things, we may with diligence possibly reach to that degree of certainty which our teachers themselves have attained, or at least to understand the reason of their doctrine. But still remember what I said before, that fundamentals must be believed with a faith explicit, absolute, and divine.

And thus I have showed the flat necessity of taking much upon the testimony of man; and that some of these human testimonies are so certain, that they may well be called divine. I conclude all with this intimation: you may see by this, of what singular use are the monuments of antiquity, and the knowledge thereof, for the breeding and strengthening of the christian faith; especially the histories of those times. I would not persuade you to bestow so much time in the reading of the fathers, in reference to their judgment in matters of doctrine; nor follow them in all things, as some do.ⁿ God's word is a sufficient rule; and latter times have afforded far better expositors. But in reference to matters of fact, for confirming the miracles mentioned in Scripture, and relating the wonderful providences since, I would they were read an hundred times more: not only the writers of the church, but even the histories of the enemies, and all other antiquities. Little do

ⁿ I may say of many of them for doctrine, as Fulbeck of Bracton, Briton, &c., Direct. p. 17: There be certain ancient writers whom, as it is not unprofitable to read, so to rely on them is dangerous; their books are monumenta adorandæ rubiginis, of more reverence than authority.

most consider how useful these are to the christian faith. And therefore our learned antiquaries are highly to be honoured, and exceedingly useful instruments in the church.

If yet any man be so blind that he think it uncertain whether these be the same books which were written by the apostles ; I would ask him by what assurance he holdeth his lands ? 1. How knoweth he that his deeds, conveyances, or leases, are not counterfeit ; or that they are the same that his forefathers made ? They have nothing but men's words for it ; and yet they think they are certain that their lands are their own. 2. And whereas they hold all they have by the law of the land, how know they that these laws are not counterfeit ; and that they are the same laws which were made by such kings and parliaments so long ago, and not forged since ? They have nothing but men's words for all this. And yet if this be uncertain, then any man, lord, or knight, or gentleman, may be turned out of all he hath, as if he had no certain tenure or assurance. And is it not evident that those laws which are so kept and practised through all the land, cannot possibly be counterfeit, but it would have been publicly known ? And yet a word in the statute-book may be falsely printed. And much more certain it is that the Scriptures cannot be counterfeit, because it is not in one kingdom only, but in all the world that they have been used, and the copies dispersed ; and ministers in office still to preach it, and publish it. So that it could not be generally and purposely corrupted, except all the world should have met and combined together for that end, which could not be done in secret, but all must know of it. And yet many Bibles may be here or there mis-printed or mis-written ; but then there would be copies enough to correct it by. So that if it be uncertain whether these be the very books which the apostles wrote, then nothing in the world is certain but what we see. And why we may not as well question our eyesight, I do not know. I would believe a thousand other men's eyesight before mine own alone.

CHAP. V.

The Second Argument.

SECT. I. I come now to my second argument, to prove Scripture to be the word of God : and it is this :

If the Scripture be neither the invention of devils nor of men, then it can be from none but God ;^o but that it is neither of devils, nor merely of men, I shall now prove ; for, I suppose, none will question that major proposition. First, Not from devils ; for, First, They cannot work miracles to confirm them ; Secondly, It would not stand with God's sovereignty over them, or with the goodness, wisdom, and faithfulness of governing the world, to suffer Satan to make laws, and confirm them with wonders, and obtrude them upon the world in the name of God, and all this without disclaiming them, or giving the world any notice of the forgery ; Thirdly,^p Would Satan speak so much for God ? So seek his glory as the Scripture doth ? Would he so vilify and reproach himself, and make known himself to be the most hateful and miserable of all creatures ? Would he so fully discover his own wiles, his temptations, his methods of deceiving, and give men such powerful warning to beware of his snares, and such excellent means to conquer himself ? Would the devil lay such a design for men's salvation ? Would he show them their danger, and direct them to escape it ? Would he so mightily labour to promote all truth and goodness, and the happiness of mankind, as the Scripture doth ? Let any man tell me what book or project in the world did ever so mightily overthrow the kingdom of Satan as this book, and this Gospel-design : and would Satan be such an enemy to his own kingdom ? Fourthly, If Satan were the author, he would never be so unweariedly and subtilely industrious, to draw the world to unbelief, and to break the laws which this book containeth, as his constant temptations do sensibly tell many a poor soul that he is ; would he be so earnest to have his own words rejected, or his own laws broken ? I think this is all clear to any man of reason.

Sect. II. Secondly : That no mere men were the inventors of Scripture, I prove thus : If men were the devisers of it, then it was either good men or bad ; but it was neither good men nor bad ; therefore, none.

Though goodness and badness have many degrees, yet under some of these degrees do all men fall. Now, I will show you that it could be neither of these ; and, First, Good men they could

^o I take it for granted that good angels could not be guilty of forging the Scripture.

^p As Origen many times demands of Celsus, if magicians by evil powers could work miracles, would they do it for the leading men from sin to exact holiness and justice ?

not be ; for you might better say that murderers, traitors, adulterers, parricides, sodomites, &c. were good men, rather than such. To devise laws, and father them upon God ; to feign miracles, and father them upon the word of the Lord ; to promise eternal salvation to those that obey them ; to threaten damnation to those that obey them not ; to draw the world into a curse so destructive to all their worldly happiness, upon a promise of happiness in another world, which they cannot give ; to endeavour so egregiously to cozen all mankind : if all this, or any of this, be consistent with common honesty ; nay, if it be not as horrible wickedness as can be committed, then I confess I have lost my reason. Much less, then, could such a number of good men in all ages, till Scriptures were finished, be guilty of such inexpressible crimes : neither will it here be any evasion to say, they were men of a middle temper ; partly good, and partly bad : for these are not actions of a middle nature, nor such as will stand with any remnants of ingenuity or humanity. We have known wicked persons, too many, and too bad ; yet where or when did we ever know any that attempted any so more than hellish an enterprise ? False prophets have sent abroad indeed particular falsehoods ; but who hath adventured upon such a system as this ?^a Mahomet's example, indeed, comes nearest to such a villany ; yet doth not he pretend to the hundredth part of so many miracles, nor so great as the Scripture relateth, nor doth pretend to be God, nor any more than a great prophet : trusting more to his sword for success, than to the authority or truth of his pretended revelations ; not denying the truth of much of the Scripture ; but adding his Alcoran, partly drawn from Scripture, and partly fitted with fleshly liberties and promises to his own ends. And doth not every man among us take that act of Mahomet to be one of the vilest that

^a Saith Duplessis : Mahomet was an Arabian, one of Heraclitus's soldiers ; and, in a mutiny, chosen by the Arabian soldiers for their commander. In his Alcoran he confesseth himself to be a sinner, an idolater, an adulterer, given to lechery : his laws run thus : Avenge yourselves of your enemies ; take as many wives as you can keep, and spare not ; kill the infidels ; he that fighteth lazily shall be damned, and he that killeth the most shall be in paradise. He saith that Christ had the Spirit and power of God, and the soul of God ; and that he is Christ's servant. See Alcoran Azoar, 2, 3, 6 ; also, Azoar, 18, 4, 11, 13. He confesseth that Christ is the Spirit, and Word, and Messenger of God ; that his doctrine is perfect, that it enlighteneth the Old Testament, and that he came to confirm it, yet denieth him to be God. Magnus fuit sanctus, magnus Dei amicus, magnus propheta, &c. Vid. Thom. Bradwin 'De Causa Dei,' lib. i. c. 1. Carol. part. 32. and Aquin. cont. Gentil. lib. i. c. 6.

the sun hath seen ; and judge of the man himself accordingly ? So that I think it beyond doubt, that no one good man, much less so great a number as were the penmen of Scripture, could devise it of their own brain, and thrust it on the world.

Secondly : And it is as certain that no bad men did devise the Scriptures. Could wicked deceivers so highly advance the glory of God, and labour so mightily to honour him in the world ; would they have so vilified themselves, and acknowledged their faults ; could such an admirable, undeniable spirit of holiness, righteousness, and self-denial, which runs through every vein of Scripture, have been inspired into it from the invention of the wicked ?^r Would wicked men have been so wise, or so zealous for the suppression of wickedness ; or so earnest to bring the world to reformation ? Would they have been such bitter adversaries to their own ways ; and such faithful friends to the ways they hate ? Would they have vilified the ungodly, as the Scripture doth ; and pronounced eternal damnation against them ? Would they have extolled the godly, who are so contrary to them ; and proclaimed them a people eternally blessed ? Would they have framed such perfect and such spiritual laws ; and would they have laid such a design against the flesh, and against all their worldly happiness, as the scope of the Scripture doth carry on ? It is needless, surely, to mention any more particulars : I think every man, of the least ingenuity, that considers this, or deliberately vieweth over the frame of the Scriptures, will easily confess that it is more than probable that it was never devised by any deceiving sinner ; much less, that all the penmen of it in several ages were such wicked deceivers.

So, then, if it was neither devised by good men nor by bad men, then surely by no men ; and, consequently, must of necessity proceed from God.

Sect. III. Secondly, That it proceed not merely from man, I also prove thus : That which was done without the help of human learning, or any extraordinary endowments of nature, and yet the greatest philosophers could never reach near it, must needs be the effect of a power supernatural ; but such is both the doctrine and the miracles in Scripture ; therefore, &c.

^r Origen. contra Cels., Arnob., Tertul., Justin, Athanas., Clemens Alexan. in Protreptic., Athanag., Lactant., with the rest that dealt with the heathen, do make the pure excellency of Christ's doctrine, above all others, one of their main arguments for the christian faith. *Christiana fides si miraculis non esset approbata, honestate sua recipi debuit, inquit Ænæas Sylvius, ut Platina, p. 328.*

It is only the antecedent that here requires proof; which consists of these two branches, both which I shall make clear.

First: That the doctrine of Scripture was compiled, and the miracles done without the help of much human learning, or any extraordinary natural endowments.^s

Secondly: That yet the most learned philosophers never could reach near the Gospel-mysteries, nor ever work the miracles that were then done.

But I shall say most to the doctrine. For the proof of the former, consider:

First: The whole world was, in the times of Moses and the prophets, comparatively unlearned.^t A kind of learning the Egyptians then had, and some few other, especially consisting in some small skill in astronomy; but it was all but barbarous ignorance, in comparison of the learning of Greece and Europe. Those writings of greatest antiquity, yet extant, do show this. See also Doctor Hackwell, as before.

2. As rare as learning then was, yet did God choose the unlearned of that unlearned time to be instruments and penmen of his choicest Scriptures. David, who was bred a shepherd, is the penman of those divine, unmatched psalms. Amos is taken from a herdsman, to be a prophet.

3. But especially in those latter ages, when the world was grown more wise and learned, did God purposely choose the weak, the foolish, the unlearned, to confound them: a company of poor fishermen, tent-makers, and such-like, must write the laws of the kingdom of Christ; must dive into the spiritual mysteries of the kingdom; must silence the wise, and disputers of the world; must be the men that must bring in the world to believe. Doubtless, as God sending David, an unarmed boy, with a sling and a stone against an armed giant, was to make it appear that the victory was from himself; so his sending these unlearned men to preach the Gospel, and subdue the world, was to convince both the present and future generations that it was God, and not man, that did the work.

^s Vide Wigandum in Method. ante comment. in minores prophetas.

^t Nam si, fuerunt omnes rudes et imperiti rerum, quorum opera Deus est usus in tradendo verbo, si non fuerunt summo loco nati, si nullis humanis instructi præsidiiis hanc rem aggressi sunt, profecto oportet doctrinam ab iis profectam esse plane divinam.—*Camero Prælect. de Verbo*, p. 435. vid. ultr. Of the characters of divinity which the Scripture hath in itself, read judicious Amyraldus's 'Theses,' 'De Authoritate Scripturæ in Thes. Salmuriens,' vol. 2. p. 43, &c.

4. Also, the course they took in silencing the learned adversaries, doth show us how little use they made of these human helps. They disputed not with them by the precepts of logic : their arguments were to the Jews, the writings of Moses, and the prophets ; and both to Jews and Gentiles, the miracles that were wrought : they argued more with deeds than with words. The blind, lame, the sick that were recovered, were their visible arguments. The languages which they spake, the prophecies which they uttered, and other such supernatural gifts of the Holy Ghost upon them ; these were the things that did convince the world : yet this is no precedent to us, to make as little use of learning as they, because we are not upon the same work, nor yet supplied with their supernatural furniture.

5. The reproaches of their enemies do fully testify this, who cast it still in their teeth, that they were ignorant and unlearned men ; and, indeed, that was the great rub that their doctrine found in the world. It was to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness ; and therefore it appeared to be the power of God, and not of man. This was it that they discouraged the people with : “Do any of the rulers or pharisees believe on him? But this people that know not the law are accursed.” (John vi. 48, 49.)

6. To conclude, the very frame and style of these sacred writings, do fully tell us, that they were none of the logicians, nor eloquent orators of the world, that did compose them. This is yet to this day, one of the greatest stumbling-blocks in the world, to hinder men from the reverencing and believing the Scriptures. They are still thinking, Surely if they were the very words of God, they would excel all other writings in every kind of excellency ; when, indeed, it discovereth them the more certainly to be of God, because there is in them so little of man. They may as well say, If David had been sent against Goliath from God, he would surely have been the most complete soldier, and most completely armed. The words are but the dish to serve up the sense in ; God is content that the words should not only have in them a savour of humanity, but of much infirmity, so that the work of convincing the world may be furthered thereby. And I verily think, that this is God’s great design, in permitting these precious spirits of divine truth, to run in the veins of infirm language, that so men may be convinced, in all succeeding ages, that Scripture is no device of human policy. If the apostles had been learned and subtle men, we should

sooner have suspected their finger in the contrivance. Yea, it is observable, that in such as Paul, that had some human learning, yet God would not have them make much use of it, lest the excellency of the cross of Christ should seem to lie in the enticing words of man's wisdom ; and lest the success of the Gospel should seem to be more from the ability of the preacher, than from the arm of God.

Besides all this, it may much persuade us that the apostles never contrived the doctrine which they preached, by their sudden and not premeditated setting upon the work. They knew not whither they should go, nor what they should do, when he calls one from his fishing, another from his custom : they knew not what course Christ would take with himself, or them ; no, not a little before he leaves them. Nay, they must not know their employment till he is taken from them. And even then is it revealed to them by parcels and degrees, and that without any study or invention of their own ; even after the coming down of the Holy Ghost, Peter did not well understand that the Gentiles must be called. (Acts x.) All which ignorance of his apostles, and suddenness of revelation, I think was purposely contrived by Christ, to convince the world that they were not the contrivers of the doctrine which they preached.

Sect. IV. Let us next, then, consider, how far short the learned philosophers have come of this. They that have spent all their days in most painful studies, having the strongest natural endowments to enable them, and the learned teachers, the excellent libraries, the bountiful encouragement, and countenance of princes, to further them, and yet, after all this, are very novices in all spiritual things. They cannot tell what the happiness of the soul is, nor where that happiness shall be enjoyed ; nor when, nor how long, nor what are the certain means to attain it ; nor who they be that shall possess it. They know nothing how the world was made, nor how it shall end ; nor know they the God who did create, and doth sustain it : but, for the most of them, they multiply feigned deities.

But I shall have occasion to open this more fully anon, under the last argument.

CHAP. VI.

The Third Argument.

SECT. 1. My third argument, whereby I prove the divine authority of the Scriptures, is this : "Those writings which have been owned and fulfilled in several ages by apparent extraordinary providences of God, must needs be of God : but God hath so owned and fulfilled the Scriptures : *ergo*, they are of God.

The major proposition will not surely be denied. The direct consequence is, that such writings are approved by God ; and if approved by him, then must they needs be his own, because they affirm themselves to be his own. It is beyond all doubt, that God will not interpose his power, and work a succession of wonders in the world, for the maintaining or countenancing of any forgery ; especially such as should be a slander against himself.

All the work, therefore, will lie in confirming the minor : where I shall show you, First, By what wonders of providence God hath owned and fulfilled the Scriptures : and, Secondly, How it may appear that this was the end of providences.

1. The first sort of providences here to be considered, are those that have been exercised for the church universal. Where these three things present themselves especially to be observed : First, The propagating of the Gospel, and raising of the church : Secondly, The defence and continuance of that church : Thirdly, The improbable ways of accomplishing these. ^x

And, First, Consider what an unlikely design, ^y in the judg-

^u Vid. Polan. Syntag. lib. i. c. 10.

^x Miserandam merito quispiam illorum censebit amentiam qui cum vituperant crucem, non vident ejus virtutem orbem implese universum, ac per ipsam Dei notitiam, ac divina opera, omnibus innotuisse.—*Athanas. lib. i. cont. Gentil. in prin.*

^y If all this be not sufficient proof of the resurrection of Christ, you may gather it from the things that are continually done. For if the dead can work nothing, and it belong only to the living to work, and to manage human affairs, let any man then see and judge, and let him acknowledge the truth when he is taught by things visible. For could our Saviour work so many things in men, and by a wonderful power persuade such multitudes (invisibly) of Grecians and barbarians to believe in him, and by the force of his power induce them all to obey his doctrine ? Dare any man yet doubt of Christ's resurrection, and that he lives ; yea, that he is the life of believers ? Can a dead

ment of man, did Christ send his apostles upon. To bid a few ignorant mechanics, Go, preach, and make him disciples of all nations. To send his followers into all the world, to make men believe him to be the Saviour of the world, and to charge them to expect salvation no other way. Why, almost all the world might say, they had never seen him : and to tell them in Britain, &c. of one crucified among thieves at Jerusalem, and to charge them to take him for their eternal king : this was a design very unlikely to prevail. When they would have taken him by force, and made him a king, then he refused, and hid himself. But when the world thought they had fully conquered him, when they had seen him dead, and laid him in his sepulchre, then doth he arise and subdue the world. He that would have said, when Christ was on the cross, or in the grave ‘that within so many weeks many thousands of his murderers should believe him to be their Saviour ; or within so many years, so many countries and kingdoms should receive him for their Lord, and lay down their dignities, possessions, and lives at his feet ;’ would have hardly been believed by any that had heard him : and I am confident, they would most of them have acknowledged, that if such a wonder should come to pass, it must needs be from the finger of God alone. That the kingdoms of the world should become the kingdoms of Christ, was then a matter exceeding improbable. But you may object that, First, It is but a small part of the world that believes. And, Secondly, Christ himself saith, that his flock is little. I answer, First, It

man persuade men’s minds to renounce their father’s laws, and obey the precepts of Christ, or make an adulterer chaste, and the manslayer and injurious to do no wrong ? If he be not risen, but still dead, how doth he banish and overthrow all false gods ? For wherever his voice soundeth, and his faith is held, thence all idol worship is destroyed, and all the subtle deceits of devils disclosed ; and no devil can endure his holy name, but as soon as he hears it doth presently fall down. Is this, I pray you, the work of a dead man, or rather, of the living God ?—*Athanas. de Incarnat. Verbi.* Christianis vero quid simile ? Neminem pudet ; neminem pœnitet : nisi plane retro non fuisse. Si denotatur, gloriatur. Si accusatur, non defendit : interrogatus, vel ultro confitetur ; damnatus gratias agit. Quid hoc mali est, quod naturalia mali non habet ? timorem, pudorem, tergiversationem, pœnitentiam, deplorationem ? Quid hoc mali est, cujus reus gaudet ? cujus accusatio votum est ; et pœna felicitas ?—*Tertullian. Apolog. c. 1.* Sed hoc agite boni præsides, meliores multo apud populum, si illos Christianos immolaveritis ; cruciate, torquete, damnate, atterite nos : probatio enim est innocentiae nostræ iniquitas vestra.—Nec quicquam tamen proficit exquisitior quæque crudelitas vestra ; illecebra est magis sectæ ; plures efficimur quoties metimur à vobis. Semen est sanguis Christianorum.—*Tertullian. Apolog. cap. ult.*

is a very great part of the world that are believers at this day, if we consider besides Europe, all the Greek church, and all the believers that are dispersed in Egypt, Judea, and most of the Turks' dominions : and the vast empire of Prestor-John in Africa. Secondly, Most countries of the world have received the Gospel ; but they had but their time : they have sinned away the light, and therefore are now given up to darkness. Thirdly, Though the flock of Christ's elect are small, that shall receive the kingdom ; yet the called, that profess to believe his Gospel, are many.

2. Consider, also, as the wonderful raising of the kingdom of Christ in the world, so the wonderful preservation and continuance of it. He sends out his disciples as lambs among wolves, and yet promiseth them deliverance and success. His followers are everywhere hated through the world ; their enemies are numerous as the sands of the sea : the greatest princes and potentates are commonly their greatest enemies, who, one would think, might command their extirpation, and procure their ruin with a word of their mouths. The learned men, and great wits of the world, are commonly their most keen and confident adversaries ; who, one would think, by their wit, should easily overreach them, and by their learning befool them, and by their policy contrive some course for their overthrow. Nay, which is more wonderful than all, the very common professors of the faith of Christ are as great haters of the sincere and zealous professors almost, if not altogether, as are the very Turks and pagans ; and those that do acknowledge Christ for their Saviour, do yet so abhor the strictness and spirituality of his laws and ways, that his sincere subjects are in more danger of them, than of the most open enemies : whereas, in other religions, the forwardest in their religion are best esteemed. Besides the temptations of Satan, the unwillingness of the flesh, because of the worldly comforts which we must renounce, and the tedious, strict conversation which we must undertake, these are greater opposers of the kingdom of Christ than all the rest ; yet in despite of all these, is this kingdom maintained, the subjects increased, and these spiritual laws entertained and obeyed ; and the church remains both firm and stedfast, as the rocks in the sea, while the waves that beat upon it do break themselves in pieces.

3. Consider, also, in what way Christ doth thus spread his Gospel, and preserve his church. First, Not by worldly might and power, nor by compelling men to profess him by the sword.

Indeed, when men do profess themselves voluntarily to be his subjects, he has authorised the sword to see in part to the execution of his laws, and to punish those that break the laws which they have accepted. But to bring men in from the world into his church, from paganism, Turkism, or Judaism, to Christianity; he never gave the sword any such commission: he never levied an army to advance his dominion; nor sent forth his followers as so many commanders to subdue the nations to him by force; and spare none that will not become Christians; he will have none but those that voluntarily list themselves under him;² he sent out ministers, and not magistrates or commanders, to bring in the world. Yea, though he be truly willing of men's happiness in receiving him, and therefore earnestly inviteth them thereto, yet he lets them know that he will be no loser by them; as their service cannot advantage him, their neglect cannot hurt him; he lets them know that he hath no need of them, and that his beseeching of them is for their own souls, and that he will be beholden to none of them for all their service; if they know where to have a better master, let them take their course; even the kings of the earth shall stoop to his terms, and be thankful too, or else they are no servants for him: his house is not so open, as to welcome all comers, but only those that will submit to his laws, and accept of him upon his own conditions; therefore hath he told men the worst, as well as the best, that if they will be discouraged or frightened from him, let them go; he tells them of poverty, of disgrace, of losing their lives, or else they cannot be his disciples. And is not this an unlikely way to win men to him; or to bring in so much of the world to worship him? He flatters none, he humoureth none; he hath not formed his laws and ways to please them. Nay, which is yet more, he is as strict in turning some men out of his service, as other masters would be ready to take them in. Therefore he hath required all his followers to disclaim all such as are obstinate offenders, and not so much as to

² *Formido illa cessavit jam diu quæ divexare nos videbatur: et æque futurum est ut in posterum cesset; nec externo ullo timore teneatur noster conventus.—Orig. cont. Cels. lib. iii. f. 33.* Non leve, immo prodigiosum fuit miraculum tam brevi spacio temporis Christi doctrinam potuisse per universum orbem diffundi, cum tot haberet adversarios: et prædicatorum esset alioquin magna simplicitas et ruditas quoad humanas artes. Intra 20 vel 30 annos Christi prædicatio fere ubique audita est, ut Chrysostomus scribit. Philosophi autem ingeniosi et docti sua dogmata nisi sero admodum extra Græciam protulerunt.—*Pet. Martyr. in Rom. 10. p. (mihi) 781.*

eat, or be familiar with them. How contrary to all this is the course of the great commanders of the world, when they would enlarge their dominions, or procure themselves followers!^a They have no course but to force men, or to flatter them. How contrary was Mahomet's course in propagating his kingdom! he levieth an army, and conquers some adjoining parties; and, as his success increaseth, so doth his presumption; he enticeth all sorts to come to his camp; he maketh laws that would please their fleshly lusts; he promiseth beautiful sights, and fair women, and such carnal delights in another world: in a word, as his kingdom was planted, so hath it been preserved by no other ways, but force and flattery. But Christ hath not one word for either of these: his compelling men to come in, is but rational persuading.

2. Nay, yet more than this, he makes his church to grow by sufferings; when others increase their dominions by the destroying of their enemies, he increaseth his by suffering them to kill his subjects; an unlikely way, one would think, to make the world either love or serve him. There have been few ages, since the first appearing of the Gospel in the world, wherein the earth hath not drunk in the blood of believers. In the beginning it was a rare case to be a faithful pastor, and not a martyr. Thirty-three Roman bishops successively are said to have been martyred;^b thousands, yea, ten thousands slaughtered at a time; insomuch that Gregory and Cyprian cry out, that the witnesses who had died for the truth of the Gospel, were to men innumerable, that the world was all over filled with their blood; and they that were left alive to behold it, were not so many as those that were slain; that no war did consume so many: and the histories of the enemies acknowledge almost as much.

Now, whether this be a likely course to gain disciples, and to subdue the world, you may easily judge. Yet did the church never thrive better than by persecution; what they got not in

^a Certe fidem sanctis vocibus pascimus, spem erigimus, fiduciam figimus, disciplinam præceptorum nihilominus inculcationibus densamus: ibidem etiam exhortationes, castigationes, et censura divina: nam et judicatur magno cum pondere, ut apud certos de Dei conspectu; summumque futuri judicii præjudicium est, si quis ita deliquerit, ut à communicatione orationis et conventus, et omnis sancti commercii relegetur.—*Tertullian Apolog.* c. 39. You have here the true description of the primitive church censure, which was performed in one particular church, as the foregoing words show.

^b Some judicious historians do exempt divers of them (as Hyginus, &c.) from the honour of martyrdom, and affirm that they were only confessors.

number, yet they got in zeal and excellency of professors; and seldom hath it lost more than in prosperity: yea, when the vulgar professors have enjoyed prosperity, yet persecution hath almost ever been the lot of the zealous and sincere.

And thus I have showed you those wonders of Providence, which have been exercised for the church universal.

Sect. II. Secondly, Consider, next, what strange providences have been exercised to particular churches. I cannot stand to heap up particular examples; you may find them frequent in the histories of the church; what deliverances cities and countries have had, what victories those princes have had, who have been their defenders; as Constantine the Great, and many since: and what apparent manifestations of God's hand in all. Yea, he that reads but the histories of latter times, where wars have been managed for defence of the doctrine of this Scripture, and obedience thereto, against the corruptions and persecutions of Rome,^c may see more apparent discoveries of the hand of God; yea, even in those wars where the enemy hath at last prevailed, as in Bohemia, in Zisca's time, in France, at Merindol and Cabriers. The history of Belgia will show it clearly: so will the strange preservation of the poor city of Geneva. But all these are further from us; God hath brought such experiments home to our hand. If we should overlook the strange providences that produced the Reformation in the times of Henry the Eighth, Edward the Sixth, Queen Mary, Queen Elizabeth, and King James; yet even the strange passages of these years past, have been such that might silence an atheist, or an anti-scripturist: to see the various straits that God hath brought his people through; the unlikely means by which he still performed it; the unexpected events of most undertakings; the uncontrived and unthought-of ways which men have been led in; the strange managing of councils and actions; the plain appearance of an extraordinary providence, and the plain interposition of an almighty arm, which hath appeared in almost all our public affairs, in all which God hath not only

^c Cum Romani in victoriosæ antiquitatis memoriam templum singulari schemate facere decrevissent, ab omni illa deorum, immo dæmoniorum multitudine, quæsierunt usque quo durare posset tam excellentis operis tam operosa constructio; responsum est, Donec virgo pareret. Illi ad impossibilitatem oraculum retorquentes, templum æternum solennem illam machinam vocaverunt. Nocte autem cum virginali thalamo virgineus flos Mariæ egressus est, ita cecidit et confractum est illud mirabile et columnarium opus, ut vix appareant vestigia ruinarum.—*Bernard, in Natal. Domini, serm. 23.*

manifested a special providence, but also notably disowned men's sins, encouraged prayer, and fulfilled promises; though as to the particular exposition of some of his providences, we may hear him say to us, as sometimes to Peter, "What I do thou knowest not now, but hereafter thou shalt know."

Sect. III. Thirdly: Consider, also, of the strange judgments which in all ages have overtaken the most eminent of the enemies of the Scriptures.^d Besides Antiochus, Herod, Pilate, the persecuting emperors, especially Julian; church-histories will acquaint you with multitudes more: Fox's Book of Martyrs will tell you of many undeniable remarkable^e judgments on those adversaries of pure religion, whose greatest wickedness is against these Scriptures, subjecting them to their church, denying them the people, and setting up their traditions as equal to them. Yea, our own times have afforded us most evident examples. Surely God hath forced many of his enemies to acknowledge in their anguish the truth of his threatenings, and cry out, as Julian, *Vicisti Galilee*.

Sect. IV. Fourthly: Consider, also, the eminent judgments of God which have befallen the vile transgressors of most of his laws. Besides all the voluminous histories that make frequent mention of this, I refer you to Dr. Beard's 'Theatre of God's Judgments,' and the book intitled 'God's Judgments upon Sabbath Breakers:' and it is likely your own observations may add much.^f

Sect. V. Fifthly: Consider, further, of the eminent providences that have been exercised for the bodies and states of particular believers. The strange deliverance of many intended to martyrdom, as you have many instances in the 'Acts and Monuments;' besides those in Eusebius, and others, that mention the stories of the first persecutions. If it were convenient here to make particular mention of men's names, I could name you many,

^d Ut memorias taceamus antiquas, et ultiones pro cultoribus Dei sæpe repetitas, documentum recentis rei satis est, quod celeriter quodque in tauta celeritate, sic granditer nuper secuta defensio est, ruinis regum, jacturis opum, dispendio militum, diminutione castrorum. Nec hoc casu accidisse, &c.—*Cyprian. ad Demetrian.* sect. 14. p. 328.

^e Not that miracles are still necessary, but special providences do much confirm. Nec jam opus est miraculis, cum in omnem terram verbum sonuerit.—*Doct. Humfredus Jesuitis.* part 1. p. 114.

^f How many churches in England were torn at once with terrible lightning; and almost no place else but churches were touched, especially at the lower part of Devonshire, where many were scorched, maimed, and some had their brains struck out as they sat in church! And at the church of Anthony, in Cornwall, near Plymouth, on Whitsunday, 1640. See the relation in print.

who, of late, have received such strange preservations, even against the common course of nature, that might convince an atheist of the finger of God therein. But this is so ordinary, that I am persuaded there is scarcely a godly-experienced Christian that carefully observes and faithfully recordeth the providences of God toward him, but is able to bring forth some such experiment, and to show you some strange and unusual mercies, which may plainly discover an Almighty Disposer, making good the promises of this Scripture to his servants: some, in desperate diseases of body, some in other apparent dangers, delivered so suddenly, or so much against the common course of nature, when all the best remedies have failed, that no second cause could have any hand in their deliverance.

Sixthly, and lastly: Consider the strange and evident dealing of God with the souls and consciences both of believers and unbelievers. What pangs of hellish despair have many enemies of the truth been brought to! How doth God extend the spirits of his own people: bruising, breaking, killing them with terrors, and then healing, raising, and filling them with joys which they cannot utter! How variously doth he mould them! Sometimes they are brought to the gates of hell, sometimes they are ravished with the foretastes of heaven: the proudest spirits are made to stoop; the lowest are raised to an invincible courage. In a word, the workings of God upon the souls of his people, are so clear and strange, that you may trace a supernatural causality through them all. Besides^b the admirable efficacy of them in changing men's hearts, and making them to differ from what they were, and from all others, in all holiness, righteousness, and self-denial.

Sect. IV. Secondly: But though it be undeniable that all these

^a Was it not near a miracle, that God wrought for Mrs. Honywood, when she threw the glass unto the wall, saying, 'If this glass break not, I may be saved,' &c., and yet took it up whole?

^b See Cyprian's Epist. 1. to Donat., expressing the change on himself. At Dei per Christum institutæ ecclesiæ, si forte expensæ cum aliorum populorum multitudinæ conferantur, veluti luminaria quædam in mundo prælucentia futuræ sunt. Quis enim non id fateatur vel deteriores quosque nostræ ecclesiæ quæ potioram respectu inferiores sunt, non longe plurimum bonitate præstare aliorum populorum multitudinæ? Extat Athenis Dei ecclesia, mansuetior quædam et optime instituta, ut quæ Deo velit omnipotenti cunctis in rebus sese morigeram exhibere. Est contra Atheniensium ipsa respublica seditiosa quidem, et quæ nil prorsus cum Dei eadem fuerit ecclesia comparanda. Haud secus de alia quadam ecclesia dixerit, quæ Corinthi sit vel Alexandriæ constituta, et ea quam seorsum habeat istarum urbium populus.—*Origen. cont. Celsum*, lib. iv. fol. (edit. Ascens.) 33.

are the extraordinary working of God ; yet how do they confirm the authority of Scripture ! How doth it appear that they have any such ends ? Answer : that is it I come to show you next.

First : Some of these works do carry their end apparently with them, and manifest it in the event. The forementioned providences for raising and preserving the church, are such as show us their own ends.

Secondly : They are most usually wrought for the friends and followers of Scripture, and against the enemies and disobeyers of it.

Thirdly : They are the plain fulfilling of the predictions of Scripture. The judgments on the offenders are the plain fulfilling of its threatenings, and the mercies to believers are the plain fulfilling of its promises. As for example ; as unlikely as it was, yet Christ foretold his apostles that when he was lifted up he would draw all men to him. He sent them upon an errand as unlikely to be so successful as any in the world ; and yet he told them just what success they should find, how good to their message, and how hard to their persons. The promise was of old, to give Christ “ the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession.” (Psal. ii. 2—5.) Christ promiseth to be with his messengers to the end of the world. Why now how punctually doth he accomplish all this ! What particular prophecies of Scripture have been fulfilled, and when, and how, hath already been discovered by others,ⁱ and therefore I shall overpass that.

Fourthly : These judgments^k have been usually executed on offenders, at the very time when they have been either opposing or violating Scripture : and these mercies bestowed chiefly upon believers at such a time, when they have been most engaged in defence of or obedience to the Scriptures.

Fifthly : They usually proceed in such effectual sort, that they force the enemies and ungodly to confess the cause : yea, and oftentimes the very standers-by ; so do they force believers also to see, that God makes good his word in all their mercies.

Sixthly : They are performed in answer to the prayers of believers ; while they urge God with the promises of Scripture, then doth he appear in these evident providences. This is a

ⁱ Morney, Grotius, Dr. Jackson's ‘ Resolut.’ part 2. &c.

^k Ask them in New England whether Mrs. Hutchinson's and Mrs. Dyer's most hideous monstrous births were not convincing providences against their antinomian, antisciptural heresies, as if God from heaven had spoken against them ? and yet Old England will not take warning. See Nicephor. ‘ Eccl. Hist.’ tom. 1. lib. 4. c. 13, where Tertul., Jul., Capitolinus, Orosius, &c., do mention.

common and powerful argument, which most Christians may draw from their own experiences. Had we no other argument to prove Scripture to be the word of God, but only the strange success of the prayers of the saints, while they trust upon, and plead the promises with fervency, I think it might much confirm experienced men. What wonders, yea what apparent miracles, did the prayers of former Christians procure! hence the christian soldiers,¹ in their army, were called the thundering legion; they could do more by their prayers, than the rest by their arms. Hence Gregory was called *Θαυματουργος*, from his frequent miracles among the heathen. And Vincentius reporteth, that Sulpitius Bituricensis did expel the devils, heal the sick, and raise the dead, by praying to God for them. When Myconius,^m a godly divine, lay sick of that consumption, which is called phthisis, Luther prayed earnestly that he might be recovered, and that he might not die before himself. And so confident was he of the grant of his desire, that he writes boldly to Myconius, that he should not die now; but should remain yet longer upon this earth. Upon these prayers did Myconius presently revive, as from the dead, and live six years after, till Luther was dead: and himself hath largely written the story, and professed, that when he heard Luther's letters, he seemed to hear that voice of Christ, "Lazarus, come forth." Yea, so powerful and prevailing was Luther in prayer, that Justus Jonas writes of him, *iste vir potuit quod voluit*, that man could do what he would.ⁿ

What was it less than a miracle in Baynam the martyr, who

¹ The legion of Malta, in the time of Mar. Aurelius, who procured by prayer both thunder on the enemies and rain for the army. See the Epistle of M. Aurelius, in Justin Martyr's 'Apol.' et Xiphilin. in vita Aurelii. And it is confidently averred by Tertullian's 'Apologet.' c. 5. with many more, as you may read at large in Pamelius' notes on Tertullian's 'Apologet.' nota 64.

^m Melch. Adam in vita Myconii.

ⁿ O si audire velles et videre, quando à nobis adjurantur et torquentur spiritualibus flagris, et verborum tormentis de obsessis corporibus ejiciuntur; quando ejulantes et gementes voce humana, et potestate divina flagella et verbera sentientes, venturum judicium confitentur! Veni, et cognosce vera esse quæ dicimus. Et quia sic Deos colere te dicis, vel ipsis quos colis crede: aut si volueris et tibi credere, de te ipso loquetur, audiente te qui nunc tuum pectus obsedit: videbis nos rogari ab eis quos tu rogas; timeri ab eis quos tu adoras, videbis sub manu nostra stare vinctos, et tremere captivos, quos tu suspicis et veneraris ut Dominos. Certe vel sic confundi in istis erroribus tuis poteris, cum conspexeris et audieris Deos tuos, quid sint, interrogatione nostra statim prodere, &c.—*Cyprian. ad Demetrium*, p. 328. This is an excellent testimony.

told his persecutors, ‘Lo! here is a miracle; I feel no more pain in this fire than in a bed of down: it is as sweet to me as a bed of roses?’ So Bishop Farrar, who could say before he went to the fire, ‘If I stir in the fire, believe not my doctrine;’ and accordingly remained unmoved. Theodorus the martyr, in the midst of his torment, had one in the shape of a young man, as he thought, came and wiped off his sweat, and eased him of his pain.

But what need I fetch examples so far off; or to recite the multitudes of them which church history doth afford us? Is there ever a praying Christian here who knoweth what it is importunately to strive with God, and to plead his promises with him believingly, that cannot give in his experiences of most remarkable answers? I know men’s atheism and infidelity will never want somewhat to say against the most eminent providences, though they were miracles themselves. That nature which is so ignorant of God, and at enmity with him, will not acknowledge him in his clear discoveries to the world, but will ascribe all to fortune or nature, or some such idol, which indeed is nothing. But when mercies are granted in the very time of prayer, and that when to reason there is no hope, and that without the help of any other means or creatures, yea, and perhaps many times over and over, is not this as plain as if God from heaven should say to us, ‘I am fulfilling to thee the true word of my promises in Christ, my Son?’ How many times have I known the prayer of faith to save the sick, when all physicians have given them up for dead?° (James v. 13—16.)

° Among abundance of instances that I could give, my conscience commandeth me here to give you this one, as belonging to the very words here written. I had a tumour rose on one of the tonsils, or almonds, of my throat, round like a pea, and at first no bigger; and at last, no bigger than a small button, and hard like a bone. The fear lest it should prove a cancer, troubled me more than the thing itself. I used first, dissolving medicines; and alter, lenitives for palliation: and all in vain for about a quarter of a year. At last my conscience smote me for silencing so many former deliverances that I had in answer of prayers; merely in pride, lest I should be derided as making ostentation of God’s special mercies to myself, as if I were a special favourite of heaven, I had made no public mention of them: I was that morning to preach just what is here written, and in obedience to my conscience, I spoke these words which are now in this page, with some enlargement not here written: when I went to church I had my tumour as before, (for I frequently saw it in the glass, and felt it constantly.) As soon as I had done preaching, I felt it was gone, and hastening to the glass, I saw there was not the least vestigium, or cicatrix, or mark wherever it had been; nor did I at all discern what became of it. I am sure I neither swallowed it, nor spit it out; and it was unlikely

It hath been my own case more than once, or twice, or ten times: when means have all failed, and the highest art or reason has sentenced me hopeless, yet have I been relieved by the prevalency of fervent prayer, and that, as the physician saith, ‘tuto, cito, et jucunde;’ ‘My flesh and my heart failed, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.’ And though he yet keep me under necessary weakness, and wholesome sickness, and certain expectation of further necessities and assaults, yet am I constrained by most convincing experiences, to set up this stone of remembrance, and publicly, to the praise of the Almighty, to acknowledge that certainly God is true to his promises, and that they are indeed his own infallible word, and that it is a most excellent privilege to have interest in God, and a spirit of supplication to be importunate with him. I doubt not but most Christians that observe the spirit and providences, are able to attest this prevalency of prayer by their own experiences.

Object. Perhaps you will say, If these rare examples were common, I would believe.

Ans. 1. If they were common, they would be slighted, as common wonders are.

Secondly: Importunate prayer is not common, though formal babbling be.

Thirdly: The evident returns of prayer are ordinary to the faithful.

Fourthly: If wonders were common, we should live by sense, and not by faith.

Fifthly: I answer, in the words of Augustin,^p God letteth not every saint partake of miracles, lest the weak should be deceived with this pernicious error, to prefer miracles as better than the works of righteousness, whereby eternal life is attained.

And let me now add, that if the Scriptures were not the word of God, undoubtedly there would have been as many wonders of Providence for the disgracing it, as have been for the defending it: and God would have destroyed the preachers of it, as the greatest abusers of him, and all the world, that should father

to dissolve by any natural cause, that had been hard like a bone a quarter of a year, notwithstanding all dissolving gargarisms. I thought fit to mention this, because it was done just as I spoke the words here written in this page. Many such marvellous mercies I have received, and known that others have received, in answer to prayer.

^p August. ‘De Civitate Dei,’ lib, xxxiii.

such a thing on him. Can any man believe that God is the just and gracious Ruler of the world, (that is, thatt here is a God,) and yet that he would so long suffer such things to be published as his undoubted laws, and give no testimony against it, if it were not true? As Perkins saith, ‘Cases of Cons.’ (lib. ii. c. 3. p. 130. sect. 1.) If it had not been God’s word, the falsehood had been detected long ago. For there hath been nothing falsely said of God at any time which he himself hath not, at some time or other, opened and revealed; as he did the false prophets.

CHAP. VII.

The Fourth Argument.

SECT. I. My fourth and last argument, which I will now produce to prove the Scripture to be the word and perfect law of God, is this:

Either the Scriptures are the written word and law of God, or else there is no such extant in the world: but there is a written word and law of God in the world: *ergo*, this is it.

Here I have these two positions to prove; First, That God hath such a written word in the world. Secondly, That it can be no other but this.

That there is such a word, I prove thus: If it cannot stand with the welfare of mankind, and consequently with that honour which the wisdom and goodness of God hath by their welfare, that the world should be without a written law, then, certainly, there is such a written law. But that it cannot stand with the welfare of the creature, or that honour of God, appears thus: that there be a certain and sufficient revelation of the will of God to man, more than mere nature and creatures do teach, is necessary to the welfare of man, and the aforesaid honour of God. But there is now no such certain and sufficient revelation unwritten in the world: therefore, it is necessary that there be such a revelation written.

The proof of the major is the main task,^a which if it be well

^a I do of purpose pass over those things which others have fully written of, because I would not trouble the world so often with the same words which others have said before us. In particular, to prove the absolute necessity that there must be some written word among and above others, great Camero

performed, will clearly carry the whole cause ; for I believe all the rest will quickly be granted, if that be once plain. Therefore, I shall stand a little more largely to prove it, viz., that there is a necessity for the welfare of man, and the honour of God's wisdom and goodness, that there be some further revelation of God's will, than is in mere nature or creatures to be found. And first I prove it necessary to the welfare of man, and that thus : If man have a happiness or misery to partake of after this life, and no sufficient revelation of it in nature or creatures, then it is necessary that he have some other revelation of it, which is sufficient. But such a happiness or misery man must partake of hereafter, which nature and creatures do not sufficiently reveal, (either end or means,) therefore some other is necessary. I will stand the largelier on the first branch of the antecedent, because the chief weight lieth on it ; and I scarce ever knew any doubt of Scripture, but they also doubted of the immortal state and recompense of souls ; and that usually is their first and chiefest doubt.

I will, therefore, here prove these three things in order thus : 1. That there is such a state for man hereafter. 2. That it is necessary that he know it, and the way to be so happy. 3. That nature and creatures do not sufficiently reveal it.

For the first, I take it for granted, that there is a God, because nature teacheth that ;^r and I shall pass over those arguments drawn from his righteousness and just dispensation, to prove the variety of men's future conditions, because they are commonly known ; and I shall now argue from sense itself, because that works best with sensual men : and that thus. If the devil be very diligent to deceive men of that happiness, and to bring them to that misery, then sure there is such a happiness and misery : but the former is true,^s *ergo* the latter. They

hath done it fully, 'Prælect. de Verbo Dei,' c. 4—6, Operum, (fol.) pp. 450, 451, &c., and shows how lamentably even the wisest of the philosophers were besotted and ignorant.

^r See Justin Martyr, Sermon. ad Gent., proving the unity of the Godhead out of the heathens themselves, Orpheus, the Sybils, Sophocles, Homer, Plato, Pythagoras, &c.

^s Hear what a heathen saith of the life to come. *Miraris hominem ad Deos ire? Deus ad homines venit; immo, quod propius est, in homines venit. Nulla sine Deo mens bona est. Semina in corporibus humanis divina dispersa sunt; quæ si bonus cultor excipit, similia origine prodeunt, et paria his ex quibus orta sunt surgunt; si malus, non aliter quam humus sterilis ac palustris necat, ac deinde creat purgamenta pro frugibus.*—*Senec. Epist. lxxiii. p. 278, 279. edit. Elsev. 1672.*

that doubt of the major proposition, do most of them doubt, whether there be any devil, as well as whether he seek our eternal undoing. I prove both together. First, By his temptation; Secondly, Apparitions; Thirdly, Their possessions and dispossessions; Fourthly, His contracts with witches. I hope these are palpable discoveries.

1. The temptations of Satan are sometimes so unnatural, so violent, and so importunate, that the tempted person even feels something besides himself persuading and urging him: he cannot go about his calling, he cannot be alone, but he feels somewhat following him, with persuasions to sin, yea, to sins that he never found his nature much inclined to, and such as bring him no advantage in the world, and such as are quite against the temperature of his body. Doth it not plainly tell us, that there is a devil, labouring to deprive man of his happiness, when men are drawn to commit such monstrous sins? ^t Such cruelty as the Romans used to the Jews at the taking of Jerusalem; so many thousand Christians so barbarously murdered; such bloody actions as those of Nero, Caligula, Sylla, Messala, Caracalla, the Roman gladiators, the French massacre, the gunpowder-plot, the Spanish inquisition, and their murdering fifty millions of Indians in forty two years, according to the testimony of Acosta, their Jesuit; men invading their own neighbours and brethren, with an unquenchable thirst after their blood, and merely because of their strictness in the common professed religion: I say, How could these come to pass, but by the instigation of the devil? When we see men making a jest of such sins as these, making them their pleasure, impudently, and implacably against knowledge and conscience, proceeding in them, hating those ways that they know to be bet-

^t *Suadent autem miris invisibilibus modis, per illam subtilitatem suorum corporum, corpora hominum non sentientium penetrando, seseque cogitationibus eorum per quædam imaginaria, visa miscendo, sive vigilantium, sive dormientium.*—*Aug. de Divin. Dæmon.* cap. 5. *Nou potest dæmon instruere novas formas in materiam corporalem, unde nec per consequens in sensum et imaginationem in quibus nil recipitur sine organo corporali; unde relinquitur, ut aliquid præexistat in corpore, quod per quandam transmutationem localem spirituum et humorum reducitur ad principia sensualium organorum; ut sic videantur ab anima imaginaria vel sensuali visione.*—*Aquin.* 1. q. 16. a. 1. *Experimur multas sæpe nobis invitis malas cogitationes in mentem obrepere. Unde vero hæ cogitationes? Ab aliquo certe agente eas commovente. Non à nobis; quia inviti illas patimur; non ab angelis bonis, neque à Deo per illos, quia cogitationes malæ sunt. A diabolis igitur sunt.*—*Zanch.* tom. 3. lib. iv. 'De Potent. Dæmon.' c. 1. p. 191.

ter, and all those persons that would help to save them ; yea, choosing sin, though they believe it will damn them ; despairing, and yet sinning still : doth not this tell men plainly, that there is a devil ; their enemy ? When men will commit the sin which they abhor in others, which reason is against ; when men of otherwise a good nature, as Vespasian, &c., shall be so bloody murderers ; when men will not be stirred from sin by any entreaty, though their dearest friends should beg, with tears, upon their knees ; though preachers convince them, and beseech them in the name of the Lord ; though wife and children, body and soul, be undone by it ; nay, when men will be the same under the greatest judgment, and under the most wonderful convincing providences, as appears in England, yea, under miracles themselves.

Surely I think all this shows that there is a devil, and that he is diligent in working our own ruin. Why else should it be so hard a thing to persuade a man to that, which he is convinced to be good ?

Sect. II. But yet if this be not evidence sufficient, the frequent apparitions of Satan in several shapes, drawing men, or frightening them into sin, is a discovery undeniable.^u I know many are very incredulous herein, and will hardly believe that there have been such apparitions. For my own part, though I am as suspicious as most in such reports, and do believe that most of them are conceits or delusions, yet having been very diligently inquisitive in all such cases, I have received undoubted testimony of the truth of such apparitions ; some from the mouths of men of undoubted honesty and godliness, and some from the report of multitudes of persons, who heard or saw. Were it fit here to name the persons, I could send you to them yet living, by whom you would be as fully satisfied as I : houses that have been so frequently haunted with such terrors, that the inhabitants successively have been witnesses of it.

Learned godly Zanchius, in his tom. 3. lib. iv. cap. 10. ‘De Potentia Dæmonum,’ saith, “he wonders that any should deny that there are such spirits, as from the effects are called hags, or fairies, that is, such as exercise familiarity with men, and do, without hurting men’s bodies, come to them, and trouble them, and, as it were, play with them. I could (saith he) bring

^u *Lege Epistolam Vossii de Samuele apparente Saulo, in Joan. Beverovicii Epistolis ; et D. Reignol. de Samuele apparente, in variis prælectionibus de lib. Apoc.*

many examples of persons yet alive, that have experience of these in themselves. But it is not necessary to name them, nor indeed convenient. But hence it appears that there are such spirits in the air : and that when God permits them, they exercise their power on our bodies, either to sport, or to hurt." So far Zanchy. And he makes this use of it : "Of this (saith he), besides the certainty of God's word, we have also men's daily experience. These devils, therefore, do serve to confirm our faith of God, of the good angels, of the kingdom of heaven, of the blessed souls, and of many things more which the Scripture delivereth. Many deny that the soul of man remaineth and liveth after death, because they see nothing go from him but his breath ; and they come to that impiety, that they laugh at all that is said of another life. But we see not the devils ; and yet it is clearer than the sun, that this air is full of devils ; because, besides God's word, experience itself doth teach it." Thus Zanchy pleads undeniable experience, (lib. iv. c. 20. p. 212.)

Luther affirmed of himself^x that at Coburge, he oftentimes had an apparition of burning torches ; the sight thereof did so affright him, that he was near swooning ; also, in his own garden, the devil appeared to him in the likeness of a black boar, but then he made light of it. Sozomen, in his Ecclesiastical History, writes of Apelles, a smith, famous in Egypt for working miracles, who, in the night, while he was at work, was tempted to uncleanness by the devil, appearing in the shape of a beautiful woman.^y The like he tells of a strange apparition in Antioch, the night before the sedition against Theodosius. Theodorus mentions a fearful sight that appeared to Gennadius, patriarch of Constantinople, and the threatening words which it uttered. The writings of Gregory, Ambrose, Austin, Chrysostom, Nicephorus, &c., make frequent mention of apparitions, and relate the several stories at large. You may read in Lavater de Spectris,^z several other relations of apparitions out of Alexander ab Alexandro, Baptista Fulgosius, and others. Ludovicus Vives, (lib. i.) 'De Veritate Fidei,' saith, "that among the savages in America, nothing is more common than to hear and see spirits in such shapes both day and night."^a The like do other writers testify of those Indians : so saith Olaus Magnus of the islanders. Cardanus de Subtilit. hath many such stories.

^x Melch. Adam. in Vita Luther.

^y Sozomen. lib. vi. c. 28, lib. vii. c. 23.

^z Lavater, pp. 64, 65.

^a De Gent. Sep. lib. ii. c. 3.

So Joh. Manlius in *Loc. Commun. Collectan.* (cap. 4.) de *Malis Spiritibus, et de satisfactione.*^a Yea, godly, sober Melancthon affirms, that he had seen some such sights or apparitions himself; and many credible persons of his acquaintance have told him, that they have not only seen them, but had much talk with spirits; among the rest he mentions one of his own aunts, who sitting sad at the fire after the death of her husband, there appeared unto her one in the likeness of her husband, and another like a Franciscan friar; the former told her that he was her husband, and came to tell her somewhat; which was, that she must hire some priests to say certain masses for him, which he earnestly besought her; then he took her by the hand, promising to do her no harm, yet his hand so burned her, that it remained black ever after, and so they vanished away. Thus writes Melancthon. Lavater also himself, who hath written a book wholly of apparitions, a learned godly protestant divine, tells us, that it was then an undeniable thing, confirmed by the testimonies of many honest and credible persons, both men and women, some alive, and some dead, that sometime by night, and sometime by day, have both seen and heard such things; some that going to bed had the clothes plucked off them; others had somewhat lying down in the bed with them; others heard it walking in the chamber by them, spitting, groaning; saying, they were the souls of such or such persons lately departed; that they were in grievous torments, and if so many masses were but said for them, or so many pilgrimages undertaken to the shrine of some saint, they should be delivered. These things, with many such more, saith Lavater, were then frequently and undoubtedly done, and, that where the doors were fast locked, and the room searched, that there could be no deceit.

^a The like may be said of the apparition of good angels encouraging the godly. Cyprian, 'De Mortalitate,' p. (mihi) 345, saith, that one like a glorious young man stood by one of his fellow presbyters at his death, as he was afraid, and praying against death, and said to him, 'Are you afraid to suffer? Are you loath to go forth? What shall I do with you?' as chiding him for his loathness to die for Christ.—*Exam. Theol.* In obsidione Nolanæ civitatis, Nolanum episcopum felicem mortuum conspectum fuisse à multis civitatem illam defendentem, refert August. lib. de Mirab. Scripturæ (si ille liber sit Augustini.) Scio innumera referri fabulosa, vel à fraude, &c. sed (n) à viris tum doctis, tum perspicacibus, tum gravibus et probis, et plurimis retro seculis allata sunt, et hodie memorantur innumera, ubi non possit non cum opera humana concurrisse illusio aut vis diabolica, supplente, viz. spiritu maligno quod hominis superet potestatem.—*Vossius Epistol. de Samuele in Beverovicii Epistol.* p. 203. Vide Mercur. Viperam de Prodig. lib. viii. Psellum.

So Sleidan relates the story of Crescentius, the pope's legate, frightened into a deadly sickness by a fearful apparition in his chamber. Most credible and godly writers tell us, that on June 20, 1484, at a town called Hamel, in Germany, the devil took away one hundred and thirty children, that were never seen again.

But I need to say no more of this; there is enough written already, not only by Cycogna, Delrio, Paracelsus, &c., but also by godly and faithful writers, as Lavater, Georg. Agricola, Olaus Magnus, Zanchius, Pictorius, and many more.^b

Object. But you will say, 'Though this prove that there are devils, and that they are enemies to our happiness; yet how doth it prove that there is a future happiness or misery for man?'

Answ. Why, plainly thus.^c What need Satan by these apparitions to set up superstition to draw men to sin, if there were no difference between sinners and others hereafter? surely, in this life it would be no great displeasure to them; for usually the wicked have the most prosperous lives; therefore his delusions must needs have respect to another life; and that the end of his apparitions is either to drive men to despair, or to superstition, or some sin, is evident to all. Most of the papists' idolatry and will-worship, hath either been caused or confirmed by such apparitions:^d for in former days of darkness they were more common than now. How the order of the Carthusian friars was founded by Bruno, upon the terrible speeches and cries of a dead man, you may read in the life of Bruno, before his 'Exposition on Paul's Epistles.' Such was the original of All Souls Day, and other holydays, as Trithemius, Petrus de Natalibus, (lib. x. cap. 1;) Polyd. Virg. de Inv. (lib. ix. cap. 9,) do declare. Also, praying for the dead, praying to saints, purgatory, merits of good works, sanctification, pilgrimages, masses, images, relics, monastical vows, auricular confession, and most of the popish ceremonies, have had their life and strength from these apparitions and delusions of the

^b Thyreus de locis infestis.

^c Neque Satan hæc præstat ut benefaciat hominibus, quos in summo habet odio; sed ut corporali unius curatione infinitos alios spirituali morte trucidet. — *Zanch. de Potentia Dæmon.* tom. 3. lib. iv. c. 10. Vide etiam Zanch. *ibid.* c. 192. p. 14.

^d So his seeming miracles. Lege Joh. Bap. Vanhelmont 'De Lithiasi,' c. 9. sect. 27. p. 168.

devil.^e But especially the cross hath been so magnified thereby,^f that it is grown the commonest remedy to drive away devils of any in the world for many hundred years; the churchyard must have one to keep the devils from the graves of the dead; and the church, and almost every pinnacle, window, and part of it, to keep him thence; the highways, also, must have them, that he molest not the traveller; yea, when morning and evening, and in times of danger, and in the beginning of any work of duty, men must sign themselves with the cross, to keep away devils: insomuch that the learned doctors do handle it among their profound questions, what makes the devil so afraid of the cross, that he shuns it above all things else? So that you may easily see what a great advantage the devil hath got over the souls of a great part of the world by these apparitions; and consequently, that, this being the very end of his endeavours, there is certainly a happiness which he would deprive us of, and a misery that he would bring us to, when this life is ended.

Sect. III. It is manifest also by the devil's possessing and tormenting the bodies of men;^g for if it were not more for the sake of the soul than the body, why should he not as much possess or torment a beast? Certainly, it is not chiefly the outward torment of the person that he regardeth, though he desires that too; for then he would not labour to settle his kingdom generally in peace and prosperity, and to make men choose iniquity for its worldly advantages: yet it may, perhaps, be the souls of others, more than the possessed persons themselves, that the devil may hope to get advantage on. So among the papists it hath brought their^h

^e Camero shows that miracles are, when things are done without second causes; and proves that the two books which Lipsius wrote, ('De Diva Virgine Hallensi,' et 'De Diva Virgine Aspricoli,') filled with pretended miracles, were not indeed of true miracles, as neither reciting the raising of the dead, or the like evident miracle, nor any cure done, but with some sensible pain or motion which showed some second cause. See Camer. 'Prælect. de Verbo Dei,' p. 438. fol.

^f How the devil doth imitate God, in setting up worship, and deluding men with his wonders, especially about the cross, read Calhill's Preface before his Answer to Martial, of the cross.

^g Zanchy thinks it is the very substance of devils that entereth men, and that they have bodies more subtle than the air, by which they enter. Tom. 3. lib. iv. c. 10. p. 188. So Augustine also thinks, 'De Divinatione Dæmonum,' c. 5. And so Tertullian saith, Dæmones sua hæc corpora contrahunt, et dilatant ut volunt; sicut etiam lumbrici et alia quædam infecta, ita dissimile illis non est penetrare in nostra corpora.

^h Si quando non oporteat his opitulari, non loquamur cum spiritu, vel adjurando, vel imperando, quasi nos audiat, sed tantum precibus et jejuniis incumbendo perseveremus.—*Origen in Matt. 17.*

exorcisms into singular credit, by the frequent dispossessing the devils. I confess there hath been many counterfeits of this kind, as the boy at Bilson, by Wolverhampton, hired by some of the papists, and discovered by the vigilant care of Bishop Morton and divers others ; but, yet, if any doubt whether there is any such thing at all, credible history and late experience may sufficiently satisfy him. The history of the dispossession of the devil out of many persons together in a room in Lancashire, at the prayer of some godly ministers, is very famous : read the book, and judge. Among the papists, possessions are common ; though very many of them are the priests and Jesuits' delusions.

What possession is, and how the devils are confined to a body,ⁱ or whether circumscribed there in whole or in part, are things beyond my reach to know ; but that the strange effects which we have seen on some bodies, have been the products of the special power of the devil there, I doubt not. Though, for my own part, I believe that God's works in the world are usually by instruments, and not immediate ; and as good ^k angels are his instruments in conveying his mercies both to soul and body, and churches and states ; so evil angels are instruments of inflicting his judgments, both corporal and spiritual. Hence God is said (Psal. lxxviii. 49,) to send evil angels among the Israelites. Hence Paul's phrase of delivering to Satan ; hence Satan did execution on the children, cattle, and body of Job ; and upon Jerusalem in that plague, and numbering the people. To satisfy you fully in this, and to silence your objections, and to teach you the true and spiritual use of this doctrine, I refer you to Mr. Lawrence's book, called 'Our Communion and War with Angels ;' and, especially, Zanchius's (tome 3) book 'De Angelis ;' and, now newly published, Mr. Ambrose's book, in which, in an epistle, I have confirmed and vindicated what I have here said.

So then, though I judge that Satan is the instrument in our ordinary diseases, yet doth he, more undeniably, appear in those whom we call the possessed. Luther thought that all phrenetic persons and idiots, and all bereaved of their understanding, had

ⁱ The devil had the power of death, saith the Holy Ghost, Heb. ii. 14.

^k The angels do serve in both these ministries (superior and inferior) in the administration and economy (or government) of earthly things.—*Clem. Alex. Stromat.* lib. vii. initio. It is Christ that giveth to the Greeks wisdom by inferior angels. For the angels are by an ancient and divine command distributed by (or through) nations.—*Ibid.*

devils : notwithstanding, physicians might ease them by remedies. And, indeed, the presence of the devil may consist with the presence of a disease and evil humour, with the efficacy of means : Saul's melancholy devil would be gone when David played on the harp. Many divines, as Tertullian, Austin, Zanchius, Lavater, &c.,¹ think that he can work both upon the body and the mind, and that he maketh use to this end of melancholy humours ; and, indeed, such strange things are oft said and done by the melancholy and mad, that many learned physicians think that the devil is frequently mixed with such distempers, and hath a main hand in many other symptoms : so Avicen, Rhasis, Arculanus, Aponensis, Jason, Patensis, Hercul. Saxon, &c. Who can give any natural cause for men's speaking Hebrew or Greek, which they never learned or spake before ; of their versifying ; their telling persons that are present their secrets ; discovering what is done at a distance, which they neither see nor hear ? Fernelius mentioneth two that he saw ;^m whereof one was so tormented with convulsive pain, sometime in one arm, sometime in the other ; sometime in one finger, &c., that four men could scarcely hold him, his head being still quiet and well. The physicians judged it a convulsion, from some malignant humour in the *spina dorsi* ; till, having used all means in vain, at last the devil derided them, that they had almost destroyed the man with their medicines. The man spoke Greek and Latin, which he never learned ; he told the physicians a great many of their secrets ; and a great deal of talk with the devil, which they had, he there mentions. In conclusion, both this and the other were dispossessed by popish prayers, fasting, and exorcism. Forestus mentions a countryman that,ⁿ being cast into melancholy, through discontent, at some injuries that he had received, the devil appeared to him in the likeness of a man, and persuaded him rather to make away himself than to

¹ Vide Pet. Martyr, in loc. 'Commun.' class i. c. 8. sect. 8. pp. 39, 40. *Dæmoniacy semper fere sunt melancholici, sed non omnes melancholici dæmoniacy.* Forest. 'Obs.' lib. x. obs. 19. Melch. Adam in Vita Luther. Vide Pet. Martyr. loc. 'Commun.' per tot. For speaking strange languages and verifying, see Guainerius, tract. 15 ; de Melanc. c. 4 ; et Wierum 'De Præstigiis,' lib. ii. c. 21—23 ; et Forest. 'Obs.' lib. x. obs. 19. in schol.

^m De 'Abdit. Rer. Causis,' lib. ii. c. 16. Vide Pæl. Plateri 'Observ.' p. 23. de stupore dæmoniaco ; et de exorcista ipso à demone percusso et læso.

ⁿ Lib. xxx. de Veveris, obs. 8. in schol. Cyprian. 'Serm. de Lapsis,' hath a history of one possessed, and of her impatience during the time of prayer : and in those times when they went to sacrament, they catechised the penitents, and the possessed were all warned to depart the assembly.

bear such indignities ; and, to that end, advised him to send for arsenic and poison himself. But the apothecary would not let him have it except he would bring one to promise that he should not abuse it, whereupon the devil went with him, as his voucher, and so he took a dram ; but, though it tormented him, yet it did not presently kill him ; whereupon the devil brought him, afterward, a rope, and after that a knife, to have destroyed himself : at which sight, the man, being affrighted, was recovered to his right mind again. You may read a multitude of such examples in Scribonius, Schenkius, Wierus, Chr. à Vega, Langius, Donatus (lib. ii. c. 1) ; ‘De Med. Mir.’ Cornel. Gemma, (lib. ii.) ; ‘De Natur. Mirac.’ (c. 4.) See also Valesius (c. 28) ; ‘Sacr. Philos.’ Roderic. à Castro (2) ; ‘De Morb. Mul.’ (c. 3) ; Schol. Cælius Rhodiginus (lib. i.) ; (antiq. lect. c. 34.) Tertullian^o challengeth the heathen to bring any one possessed with the devil before their judgment-seat, or one that pretended to have the spirit of the gods ; and if, at the command of a Christian, he do not confess himself to be a devil, let them take the Christian to be presumptuous, and put him immediately to death. But of Jesus, saith he, they say not so, nor that he was a mere man ; but the Power, the Wisdom, and the Word of God ; and that they are devils, damned for their wickedness. The like doth Cyprian. ad Demetrian. sect. 2.

So that it seems it was then common for the devil in the possessed to confess Christ, or else Tertullian durst not have made such a challenge.

Some wonder that there were so many possessed with devils in Christ’s time, and so few since : but they understood not that it was madmen whom they call possessed : and Christ confirmed their judgment ; as Mr. Mead, on John x. 20, hath proved out of Scripture, and from Plautus, Justin Mart., Timotheus Alex., Balzamon, Zonaras, to whom I refer the reader for the fuller proof hereof.

Sect. IV. The fourth and last of these palpable arguments, to prove that man hath a future happiness or misery, is drawn from the devil’s compacts with witches.^p It cannot be only his de-

^o Tertul. ‘Apol.’ c. 23. where he pressed them on to make trial of it.

^p See a notable story of a woman pretending to have the Holy Ghost, but proving to be a witch, and what wonders she did ; and had a gift of prayer, and did baptise and administer the Lord’s supper in the ordinary way, in Firmilianus, ‘Epist. Cyprian,’ 75, p. 238.

sire of hurting their bodies, that makes him enter into these contracts with them; for that he might procure by other means as likely. Besides, it is some kind of prosperity, or fulfilling their desires, which he conditioneth to give them. It is a childish thing to conceit, that the devil cares so much for a few drops of their blood. Is not the blood of a beast or other creature as sweet? Neither can it be only the acknowledgment of his power that he aims at, nor a mere desire of being honoured or worshipped in the world, as Porphyrius and other pagans have thought; for he is most truly served, where he is least discerned; and most abhorred when he most appears. His apparitions are so powerful a means to convince the atheist, who believes not that there is either God, or devil, or heaven, or hell, that I am persuaded he would far rather keep out of sight, and that for the most part he is constrained of God to appear against his will. Besides, if Satan sought his own honour, he would still speak in his own name: but, contrarily, his usual appearance is in the shape and name of some deceased person, affirming himself to be the soul of such a one; or else he pretends to be an angel of light: and when he makes his compacts with witches, it is seldom so plainly and directly as that they understand it is indeed the devil that they deal with. So that it is apparent, Satan seeks something more than the honour of domineering, that is, the ruin of the party with whom he deals. And that it is not their bodily and temporal ruin only, appears further by this, that he will heal as well as hurt, and give power to his confederates to do the like; and this tends not to the ruin of men's bodies. Though there be a great deal of deceit among them, yet doubtless many have been cured by popish spells, and pilgrimages, and exorcisms.^q Carolus Piso mentions

^q Bishop Hall saith Satan's prevalency, in this age, is most clear in the marvellous number of witches abounding in all parts. Now, hundreds are discovered in one shire: and, if fame deceive us not, in a village of fourteen houses, in the north, are found so many of this damned breed. Heretofore, only barbarous deserts had them; now the civilest and most religious parts are frequently pestered with them. Heretofore, some silly, poor, ignorant, old woman, &c. Now, we have known those of both sexes, who have professed much knowledge, holiness, and devotion, drawn into this damnable practice. —*Hall's Soliloquy*, 15, pp. 53, 54. Car. Piso de morbis serosis observ. 9. De dolore auris cum odontalgia, pp. 45, 46. Even the papists confess that all those spells, and scrolls, and actions, which must be done at such an hour, or in such a form and order, and with such circumstances, as nothing conduce to the effect intended: if these do any thing, it is from the devil. Vide Reginaldum, 'Prax. Conscien. Cas.' part 1, q. 7; et 'Prax. for Pœnitential,' lib.

one of his patients who was incurably deaf a year together, and was suddenly cured in the midst of his devotion to the lady of Loretto. Fernelius mentions those that could stop any bleeding by repeating certain words. He saw an universal jaundice cured in one night, by the hanging of a piece of paper about the neck. A great deal more to the same purpose he hath, '*De abditis rer. causis*,' (lib. ii. c. 16.) If any should doubt whether there be any such witches, who thus work by the power of the devil, or have any compact with him, he hath as good opportunity now to be easily resolved, as hath been known in most ages. Let him go but into Suffolk, or Essex, or Lancashire, &c., and he may quickly be informed. Surely it were strange, if in an age of so much knowledge and conscience, there should so many scores of poor creatures be put to death as witches, if it were not clearly manifest that they were such. We have too many examples lately among us, to leave any doubt of the truth of this.

So that by these attempts of Satan to deceive and destroy souls, it is evident, that there is an estate of happiness or misery for every man after this life.^r

All those arguments, which every common-place book and philosopher almost can afford you, to prove the immortality of the soul, will also serve to prove the point in hand. But many can apprehend these arguments from sense, who cannot yet reach, and will not be convinced by other demonstrations, as temptations, apparitions, possessions, dispossessions, and witches, are most excellent means to convince a Sadducee, that there are angels and spirits; so, also, by clear consequence, that there is a resurrection and eternal life.

Sect. V. The second thing that I am to clear to you, is, that it is necessary for man to know this happiness, and the way to obtain it; and to know the misery and the way to escape it. This appears thus :

First : If he must go that way, and use those means, then he must needs first know both the end and the way : but he that will obtain the end, must use the means ; therefore, he

xvii. nu. 157, et seq. Read Bodin, and Permigijs, and Danæus, of witches, and many authors, together in the '*Malleus Maleficarum*.' See more in my book against infidelity.

^r De Simonis Magi præstigijs scripsere Abdias Epist.; Bahil. in Certam; Apost.; et Egesyp., et Nicephor., et plures. Vide etiam quæ scripsit Olaus Magn. '*De Gent. Septentrional.*' lib. iii. c. 4, de Metothin. Magno. et de alijs, lib. iii. c. 18.

must necessarily know them. All this is so evident, that, I believe, few will deny it. That man must use means before he attain the end, is evident.

First : From the nature of the motion of the rational soul, which is to seek the attainment of its propounded end, by a voluntary use of means conducing thereto : for as it hath not, at its first infusion, that height of perfection, whereof it is capable, so, neither is it carried thereto by violence, or by blind instinct, for then it were not a rational motion.

Secondly : Yea, the very enjoyment of the end, and the seeking of it, are actions of the same nature : it is enjoyed by the knowing, loving, rejoicing, &c., and these actions are the means to attain it.

Thirdly : And if the means were not necessary to the end, the wicked were as capable of it as the godly ; but that will not stand with the justice of God.

Fourthly : If knowledge of the end, and use of means, were not of necessity to the obtaining of that end, then a beast, or a block, were as fit a subject for that blessedness, as a man : but these cannot be.

And that man cannot seek a happiness, which he never knew ; and shun a misery, which he was not aware of ; nor use means thereto, which he never was acquainted with ; I think would be lost and needless labour for me to prove.

Sect. VI. The third thing that I am to prove, is this : That mere nature and creatures, contain no sufficient revelation of the fore-mentioned end and means.^s This appears thus : First, Nature, by the help of creatures, though it tell us that there is a God, yet, how he will be worshipped, or how he came to be displeased with the world, or how he must be reconciled ; of all this it tells us but little. Again, though it may possibly acquaint us with the immortal state, yet what the happiness there is, and what the misery, or how we are naturally deprived of that happiness, and how it must be recovered, and who they be that shall enjoy it ; of all this it tells us little : much less of the resurrection of our bodies from the grave. So, also, though nature may possibly find itself depraved, yet how it came to be so, or how to be healed, or how to be pardoned, it cannot tell.

^s If it were not God's book, then all God's will should be hidden, and God should never yet have revealed his will to man.—*Perkins' Cases of Conscience*, lib. ii. c. 3.

Secondly : If nature, by the mere book of the creatures, could learn all things necessary, yet, First, It would be slow, and by so long study. Secondly, And so doubtfully and uncertainly. Thirdly, And so rarely, that it appears by this, the means of revelation is not sufficient. All this apparent by event and success. For what nature and creatures do sufficiently teach, that some of their scholars have certainly learned.

First, then, observe, how long did the most learned philosophers study before they could know those few imperfect notions, which some of them did attain to, concerning eternity? They were gray with age and study, before they could come to know that which a child of seven years old may now know by the benefit of Scripture. But all men live not to such an age, therefore this is no sufficient means.

Secondly, observe, also, how uncertain they were, when all was done ; what they speak rightly concerning God, or the life to come, in one breath, they are ready to unsay it again in another, as if their speeches had fallen from them against their wills, or as Caiaphas's confession of Christ. They raise their conclusions from such uncertain premises, that the conclusions also must needs be uncertain.

Thirdly, observe, also, how rare that knowledge was among them. It may be in all the world, there may be a few hundreds of learned philosophers, and among those there is one part epicures, another peripatetics, &c., that acknowledge not a future happiness or misery. And of those few that do acknowledge it, none knows it truly, nor the way that leads to it. How few of them could tell what was man's chief good ! And those few, how imperfectly ; with what mixtures of falsehood ! we have no certainty of any of them that did know so much, as that there was but one God. For though Socrates died for deriding the multitudes of gods, yet there is no certain record of his right belief of the unity of the godhead. Besides, what Plato and Plotinus^t did write of this that was sound, there is far greater probability that they had it from Scripture, than merely from nature and creatures. For that Plato^u had read

^t Sir Walter Raleigh's 'History of the World,' sheweth that Pythagoras, Orpheus, and Plato, had their doctrine of God from Scripture, but durst not profess it. Plotinus was Origen's condisciple of Ammonius, therefore no wonder if he be liker a divine than the rest. See Pemble 'Vind. Grat.' of this, pp. 60—62, &c.

^u Therefore Numenius, cited by Origen against Celsus, doth call him Moses

the writings of Moses, is proved already by divers authors. The like may be said of Seneca,^x and many others. So that if this means had contained any sufficiency in it for salvation, yet it would have extended but to some few of all the learned philosophers: and what is this to an universal sufficiency to all mankind? nay, there is not one of all their exactest moralists, that have not mistaken vice for virtue; yea, most of them give the name of virtue to the foulest villanies, such as self-murder, in several cases, revenge, a proud and vain-glorious affectation of honour and applause, with other the like; so far have these few learned philosophers been from the true knowledge of things spiritual and divine, that they could never reach to know the principles of common honesty. Varro saith, that there were in his days, two hundred and eighty-eight sects or opinions among philosophers concerning the chief good: what, then, should the multitudes of the vulgar do, who have neither strength of wit to know, nor time, and books and means to study, that they might attain to the height of these learned men? so that I conclude with Aquinas,^y that if possibly, nature and creatures might teach some few enough to salvation, yet were the Scriptures of flat necessity; both for the more enlarged: Secondly, And the more easy and speedy: Thirdly, And the more certain spreading of knowledge and salvation.

Sect. VII. But here are some objections^z to be answered, First, Were not the fathers till Moses, without Scripture? Answ. First, Yet they had a revelation of God's will, besides what nature or creatures taught them. Adam had the doctrine of the tree of knowledge, and the tree of life, and the tenor of the covenant made with him, by such revelation, and not by nature. So had the fathers the doctrine of sacrificing; for nature could teach them nothing of that, therefore, even the heathens had it from the church. Secondly, All other revelations are now ceased,

Atticus: and divers of Numenius' books do recite with great reverence many texts out of Moses and the prophets.

^x Though the epistles betwixt Paul and Seneca may be feigned, yet it is more than probable that he had heard or read Paul's doctrine. And Clemens Alex., citing the same in Numenius, shows also out of Aristobulus, l. Philomatrem, that Plato was very studious of Moses and the Jews' laws; and saith also that Pythagoras took many things out of the Scriptures.—*Stromat.* lib. i.

^y Aquin. Sum. 1a, 1æ. art. 1. q. 1. and 2a, 2æ, q. 1. art. 34. But more fully, 'Cont. Gent.' lib. i. c. 4—6.

^z See Scharpii cursus Theol. de S. Scrip. Contro. 6. de Neces. S. S. pp. 122—124, and so almost every common-place book answers this.

therefore this way is more necessary. Thirdly, And there are many truths necessary now to be known, which then were not revealed, and so not necessary.

Object. 2. Doth not the apostle say, that which may be known of God, was manifest in them, &c.?

Ans. This, with many other objections, are fully scanned by many divines, to whom I refer you; particularly Dr. Willet, on Rom. i. 14, 20, &c. Only in general I answer, there is much difference between knowing that there is a God of eternal power, which may make the sinner inexcusable for his open sin against nature, (which the apostle there speaks of,) and knowledge which is sufficient to salvation. How God deals with the multitude that have not the Scripture, as to their eternal state, I leave as a thing beyond us, and so nothing to us: but if a possibility of the salvation of some of them be acknowledged, yet in the three respects above mentioned, there remains still a necessity of some further revelation than nature or creatures do contain. And thus I have manifested a necessity for the welfare of man. Now it would follow that I show it necessary for the honour of God; but this follows so evidently as a consequence of the former, that I think I may spare that labour.

Object. But what if there be such a necessity, doth it follow that God must needs supply it? Ans. Yes, to some part of the world. For, First, It cannot be conceived how it can stand with his exceeding goodness, bounty, and mercy, to make a world, and not to save some. Secondly, Nor with his wisdom, to make so many capable of salvation, and not reveal it to them, or bestow it on them. Thirdly, Or to prepare so many other helps to man's happiness, and to lose them all for want of such a sufficient revelation. Fourthly, Or to be the Governor of the world, and yet to give them no perfect law to acquaint men with their duty, and the reward of obedience, and penalty of disobedience.

Having thus proved that there is certainly some written word of God in the world, the last thing that I have to prove is, that there is no other writing in the world but this that can be it. And, First, There^a is no other book in the world, that ever I heard of, that doth so much as claim this prerogative and

^a The apocryphal books are but records more imperfect and uncertain, of the same doctrine for the substance with the rest, though mixed with some suspected history, and doth confirm, but not contradict the Scriptures; and but few of those books do pretend to a divine authority, as the rest.

dignity. Mahomet^b calleth himself but a prophet, he acknowledgeth the truth of most of the Scripture, and his Alcoran^c contradicteth the very light of nature. Aristotle, Plato, and other philosophers, acknowledge their writings to be merely of their own study and invention. What book saith, 'Thus saith the Lord,' and 'This is the word of the Lord,' but this? So that if it hath no competitor, there needs not so much to be said.

2. What other book doth reveal the mysteries of God, of the Trinity, of God and man in one person, of creation, of the fall, the covenants, their conditions, heaven, hell, angels, devils, temptations, regeneration, worship, &c., besides this one book, and those that profess to receive it from this, and profess their end to be but the confirming and explaining the doctrine of this? Indeed, upon those subjects which are below the Scripture, as logic, arithmetic, &c., other books may be more excellent than it; as a tailor may teach you to make a cloak better than all the statute books or records of parliament. But this is a lower excellency than the Scripture was intended to.^d

And thus I have done with this weighty subject, that the Scripture, which contains the promises of our rest, is the certain infallible word of God. The reason why I have thus digressed, and said so much of it, is, because I was very apprehensive of the great necessity of it, and the common neglect of

^b Though Mahomet pretended to speak from God as a prophet, the barbarousness and sottishness of his Alcoran, its contradiction of itself, and to the Scripture, which he acknowledgeth, may satisfy any man of its forgery, so that it is the most stupendous judgment of God, that so great a part of the world should continue so brutish as to believe and follow him still. Read Bradwardine's excellent dispute on this subject, 'De Causa Dei,' lib. i. Corol. part 32, and Grotius 'De Veritate Relig. Christianæ.'

^c Certe in Alcorano nulla, aut infrequens, fit mentio miraculorum; aut si quæ fiat, sunt illa monstrosa, et hac nota iniusta, ut non modo pro ingenio conficta, sed barbare quoque excogitata videantur: tum non audet illius miraculi testes appellare; non enim sunt talia, ut author Alcorani palam ausit asserere patrata.—*Camero de Verbo Dei*, p. 441.

^d That the heathen religion is not the true religion, all the old fathers that wrote against them, Justin, Arnobius, Lactantius, Tertullian, Athanasius, Origen, and the rest before named, have showed at large. Non ideo majorem fidem adhibemus evangelio Joannis, quam Nicodemi, quod ab ecclesia constitutum et decretum fit, &c. Nullibi enim decretum est, nec ullum de hac re concilium unquam vocatum. Sed quod apostoli adhuc in vivis, hujusmodi evangelia rejecerunt. His enim credidit ecclesia, et eorum fides posteris manifestavit apostoli etiam et evangelistæ evangelia sua conscripta tradiderunt ecclesiæ, quibus ipsa alia deinde examinavit; et quoniam illa multum differre cognovit ea rejectit; aliosque de illis præmonuit.—*Bullinger. Corp. Doct.* lib. i. c. 4.

being grounded in it; and withal, that this is the very heart of my whole discourse; and that if this be doubted of, all the rest that I have said will be in vain. If men doubt of the truth, they will not regard the goodness. And the reason why I have said no more, but passed over the most common arguments, is, because they are handled in many books already; which I advise Christians to be better versed in. To the mere English reader I commend especially these: Sir Philip Morney, Lord du Plessis's 'Verity of Christian Religion;' Grotius 'Of the Truth of Christian Religion,' which is lately translated into English; and Mr. Perrin's 'Cases of Conscience,' (lib. ii. c. 3); Parson's 'Book of Resolution,' corrected by Bunney, (the second part.) Dr. Jackson on the Creed, and (come forth since I began this) Mr. White's, of Dorchester, 'Directions for Reading Scripture.' Mr. John Goodwin's 'Divine Authority of Scripture Asserted.' Also, read a book called, 'A Body of Divinity,' (first part,) written by our honest and faithful countryman, Colonel Edward Leigh. Also, Ursinus's Catechism on this question; and Ball's Catechism, with the exposition, which, to those that cannot get larger treatises, is very useful.^e

For the question, How it may be known which books are canonical? I here meddle not with it: I think human testimony, with the fore-mentioned qualifications, must do most in determining that. Yet we must carefully distinguish between those canonical books which have been questioned, and those which were unquestioned, but delivered by more infallible tradition; and also between those which contain most of the substance of our faith, and those which do not.

Prop. 1. No book in the canon was ever generally doubted of; but when one church doubted of it, others received it, from whom we have as much reason to receive them, as from the Roman church.

Prop. 2. Those books which have been generally received, are known to be canonical, by the same way, and testimony,

^e So Dr. Preston 'On the Attributes,' pp. 40, 41, and forward; and Byfield's 'Principles.' In Latin, the best that I know of is Grotius 'De Veritate Relig.;' and especially Camero's 'Prælectiones de Verbo Dei;' though every common-place book speaks to this end, and some very well, as Lud. Crocius, Polanus, &c., Kimidontius 'De Verbo Scripto,' &c. And the fathers that write against the pagans, are of great use to students in this point, as Justin, Athenagoras, Tatianus, Lactantius, Tertullian, Cyprian, Athanasius, Clemens Alexandrinus, &c. but especially Origen against Celsus.

and means, as the Scripture in general is known to be God's word.^f

Prop. 3. It is not a thing which one cannot be saved without, to believe every particular book to be canonical; if we believe all that were generally received, yea, or but one book which containeth the substance of christian doctrine, though we doubt of those, that some formerly doubted of, it would not exclude from salvation. The books are received for the doctrine's sake. It is vain cavilling, therefore, for the papists, when they put us to prove the canon, they stick only on the questioned books; especially when those were but few and short. Matthew, and Mark, and Luke, and John, and Paul's writings, which are full, and contain the main body of christian doctrine, do, withal, contain the characters of their own canonical verity, which, seconded by the conveyance of universal, rational, infallible tradition, (not Romish authoritative tradition, or the judgment of the pope, or the present church,) may certainly be discerned; even with a saving certainty, by those that are specially illuminated by God's Spirit; and with an ordinary rational certainty, by those that have God's common help.

I conclude this as I began, with an earnest request to ministers that they would preach, and to people that they would study this subject more thoroughly; that while they firmly believe the truth of that word which promiseth them rest, and prescribes them the means thereto, they may believe, and hope, and love, and long, and obey, and labour, with the more seriousness, and liveliness, and patient constancy.

CHAP. VIII.

Rest for none but the People of God, proved.

SECT. I. It may here be expected, that as I have proved, that this rest remaineth for the people of God; so I should now prove, that it remaineth only for them; and that the rest of the world

^f When Jerome proveth the 'Epistle to the Hebrews' to be canonical, he sheweth how we must judge of the canon: Non per hujus temporis consuetudinem, sed veterum Scriptorum auctoritatem plerumque utriusque abutentium testimoniis; non ut apocryphis, sed canonicis et ecclesiasticis.—*Hier. ad Dardan.* tom. 4. fol. 29. Where then is the papists' judicial authority of the present pope or church?

shall have no part in it. But the Scripture is so full and plain in this, that I suppose it needless to those who believe Scripture. Christ hath resolved, that those who make light of him, and the offers of his grace, shall never taste of his supper: "and that without holiness, none shall see God: and that, except a man be regenerate, and born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That he that believes not, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him: that no unclean person, nor covetous, nor railer, nor drunkard, &c., shall enter into the kingdom of Christ, and of God." (Eph. v. 4, 5.) "That the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all they that forget God: that all they shall be damned that obey not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thess. ii. 12.) "That Christ will come in flaming fire, to take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."^h And Christ himself hath opened the very manner of their process in judgment, and the sentence of their condemnation to eternal fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. (Matt. xxv.) So that here is no rest for any but the people of God, except you will call the intolerable everlasting flames of hell a rest.

And it were easy to manifest this also by reason. For, First, God's justice requires an inequality of men's state hereafter, as there was of their lives here. And, Secondly, They that walk not in the way of rest, and use not the means, are never likely to obtain the end: they would not follow Christ in the regeneration, nor accept of rest upon his conditions; they thought him to be too hard a master, and his way too narrow, and his laws too strict: they chose the pleasures of sin for a season, rather than to suffer affliction with the people of God: they would not suffer with Christ, that so they might reign with him. What they made choice of, that they did enjoy; they had their good things in this life; and what they did refuse, it is but reason they should want: how oft would Christ have gathered them to him, and they would not; and he useth to make men willing before he saves them, and not to save them against their wills.

Therefore will the mouth of the wicked be stopped for ever, and all the world shall acknowledge the justice of God. Had the ungodly but returned before their life was expired, and

^h Matt. xxii. 5—7; Luke xiv. 25; Heb. xii. 14; John i. 33, and iii. 18, 36; 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10; Gal. v. 21; Psal. ix. 17; 2 Thess. i. 8—10.

been heartily willing to accept of Christ for their Saviour and their King, and to be saved by him in his way, and upon his most reasonable terms, they might have been saved.

Object. But may not God be better than his word, and save those that he doth not promise to save?

Ans. But not false of his word, in saving those whom he hath said he will not save. Men's souls are in a doleful case when they have no hope of happiness, except the word of God prove false. To venture a man's eternal salvation, upon hope that God will be better than his word, that is, in plain English, that the God of truth will prove a liar, is somewhat beyond stark madness, which hath no name bad enough to express it.

Yet do I believe, that the description of God's people in England, and in America, must not be the same; because, as God's revelations are not the same, so neither is the actual faith which is required in both the same; and as the written and positive laws in the church were never given them, so obedience to those mere positives is not required of them. Whether, then, the threats against unbelievers be meant of unbelief privative and positive only, and not negative (such as is all non-believing that which was never revealed); or, whether their believing that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek him, will serve the turn there; or, whether God hath no people there? I acknowledge again is yet past my understanding.

So that in what is said, you may discern not only the truth, but also the reason and equity, that none but God's people shall enter into his rest. Though God's will is the first cause of all things, yet all the fault lies in sinners themselves. Their consciences shall one day tell them that they¹ might have been saved, if they would; and that it was their own wilful refusal, which shut them out. God freely offered them life, and they would not accept it on his own easy and reasonable conditions. They perish, because they would not be saved in God's way. The pleasures of the flesh seemed more desirable to them than the glory of the saints: Satan offered them the one, and God of-

¹ The catholic verity neither denieth free-will either to a good life or a bad; nor yet ascribeth so much to it, as if it were able without God's grace, either to convert a man from bad to good, or to make him perseveringly proceed in good, or attain to that everlasting good where he need not fear falling away.—*August. Epist. 47.* The precepts of love were in vain given to men that have not free-will: but when they are given by the old and new law; and the law without grace is a killing letter, but in the grace of the Spirit it is quickening; whence, then, have men the love of God, but from God?—*August. lib. de Grat. et lib. Arbit. c. 11.*

ferred them the other, and they had free liberty to choose which they would ; and they chose the pleasures of sin for a season, before the everlasting rest with Christ. And is it not a righteous thing, that they should be denied that which they denied to accept ? Nay, when God pressed them so earnestly, and persuaded them so importunately, and even beseeched them by his messengers, and charged us to compel men by importunity, and taking no denial, to come in ; and, yet, they would not ; where should they be, but among the dogs without ? Though man be so wicked, that he will not yield, till the mighty power of grace do prevail with him, yet, still we may truly say, that he may be saved, if he will, on God's terms.^k And his disability being moral, lying in wilful wickedness, is no more excuse to him, than it is to a common adulterer, that he cannot love his own wife ; or to a malicious person, that he cannot choose but hate his brother : is he not so much the worse, and deserveth so much the sorer punishment ? As, therefore, I would have all sinners believe this, so I would advise all ministers more to preach it. Pry not too much into the depths of God's decrees. Alas ! how little know we of far lower things ! lay all the blame on the wills of sinners ; bend your speeches to persuade their wills. Is not that the business of our calling ? Let me give you but one argument, which deserves to be considered. Sinners shall lay all the blame on their own wills in hell for ever. Hell is a rational torment by conscience, according to the nature of the rational subject. If sinners could but say, then, it was long of God, whose will did necessitate me, and not of me, it would quiet their consciences, and ease their torment, and make hell to be no hell to themselves. But to remember their wilfulness, will feed the fire, and cause the worm of conscience never to die.

CHAP. IX.

Reasons why this Rest remains, and is not here enjoyed.

SECT. I. The next thing promised in the beginning, in my method, which in the first edition I forgot to perform, is to show

^k I would that excellent treatise of Mr. William Fenner, 'Of Wilful Impenitency,' published by Rev. Dr. Hill, were more imitated by some divines in their preaching. And that when they have done, they would not quite contradict their popular doctrine in their polemical.

you, why this rest must yet remain, and not be enjoyed till we come to another world. And I will speak but a little to this, because it may be gathered from what is said before; and because much is said to it in the first and second chapters of the fourth part.

And First, The main reason is the will of God, that it should be so. Who should dispose of the creatures, but he that made them; and order the times and changes of them, but their absolute Lord, who only also hath wisdom to order them for the best, and power to see his will accomplished? You may therefore as well ask, Why have we not the spring and harvest without winter? And why is the earth below, and the heavens above? And why is not all the world a sun, that it may be more glorious? &c.; as to ask, why we have not rest on earth?

2. Yet may you easily see satisfactory reason in the thing itself also. As first, God should subvert the established order in nature, if he should give us our rest on earth. All things must come to their perfection by degrees: nothing is perfect in its beginning, where the fall brought an imperfection. The strongest man must first be a child, and formed in the womb from small obscure principles. The greatest scholar must first be a schoolboy, and begin in his alphabet. In the best-ordered governments men must come to their dignity and authority by degrees, beginning at the lower, and rise as they deserve. The skilfullest artificer was first an ignorant learner. The tallest oak was once an acorn. This is the constant course of nature in the production of sublunary things; and I know none that deny it, but only some enthusiasts concerning the production of grace, who think they are taught of God fully in an instant; and think themselves perfect, as soon as they have learned the opinion of the perfectionists; when all knowing men about them discern their imperfections; yea, such horrid paganism and profaneness in some of them, as if they had almost renounced humanity and reason. Now, this life is our infancy; and would we be perfect in the womb, or born at full stature; must God overturn the course of nature for us?

3. And it were an absurdity in morality, as well as a monster in nature, if our rest and full content were here. For, First, It would be injurious both to God and to ourselves.

First, To God; and that both in this life, and in the life to come. 1. In this life it would be injurious to God, both in regard of what he is here to do for us, and in regard of what he is to receive, as it were, from us. 1. If our rest were here,

then most of God's providences must be useless, his great designs must be frustrated, and his gracious workings and mercies needless to us. Should God lose the glory of all his churches' deliverances, of the fall of his enemies, of his wonders and miracles wrought to this end, and that all men may have their happiness here? If the Israelites must have been kept from the brick-kilns, and from the danger of the Egyptians' pursuit, and of the Red Sea, then God must have lost the exercise of his great power, and justice, and mercy, and the mighty name that he got upon Pharaoh. If they had not felt their wilderness necessities, God should not have exercised his wilderness providences and mercies. If man had kept his first rest in paradise, God had not had opportunity to manifest that far greater love to the world in the giving of his Son. If man had not fallen into the depth of misery, Christ had not come down from the height of glory, nor died, nor risen, nor been believed on in the world. If we were all well, what need we the Physician. And if all were happy, and innocent, and perfect, what use were there for the glorious works of our sanctification, justification, preservation, and glorification: what use for his ministers, and word, sacraments, and afflictions, and deliverances?

2. And, as God should not have opportunity for the exercise of all his grace, but some only; so he would not have returns from us for all. We should never fear offending him, and depend on him so closely, and call upon him so earnestly, if we wanted nothing. Do we not now feel how ready our prayers are to freeze, and how sleepily we serve him, and how easily we let slip, or run over a duty, if we be but in health, and credit, and prosperity, though still we are far from all content and rest? How little then should he hear from us, if we had what we would have! God delighteth in the soul that is humble and contrite, and trembleth at his word; but there would be little of this in us, if we had here our full desires. What glorious songs of praise had God from Moses, at the Red Sea, and in the wilderness; from Deborah, and Hannah, and David, and Hezekiah; from all his churches, and from each particular gracious soul in every age! which he should never have had, if they had been the choosers of their own condition, and had nothing but rest. Have not thine own highest joys and praises to God, reader, been occasioned by thy dangers, or sorrows, or miseries? We think we could praise God best, if we wanted nothing; but experience tells us the contrary; we may have a

carnal joy in congratulating our flesh's felicity, which may deceive an hypocrite; but not so sensible acknowledgments of God: indeed, in heaven, when we are fit for such a state, it will be far otherwise. The greatest glory and praise that God hath through the world, is for redemption, reconciliation, and salvation by Christ; and was not man's misery the occasion of that? Besides, as variety is part of the beauty of the creation, so it is of Providence also. If all the trees, or herbs, or fowls, or beasts, or fishes, were of one kind, and all the world were but like the sea, all water, or like one plain field, yea, or one sun, it were a diminution of its beauty. And, if God should exercise here but one kind of providence, and bestow but one kind of grace (delight), and receive thanks but for one, it would be a diminution of the beauty of Providence.

2. And it would be no small injury to ourselves, as well as to God, if we had our full contents and rest on earth: and that both now and for ever. 1. At the present it would be much our loss; where God loseth the opportunity of exercising his mercies, man must needs lose the happiness of enjoying them. And where God loseth his praises, man doth certainly his comforts. Oh! the sweet comforts that the saints have had in returns to their prayers; when they have lain long in sorrow, and importunate requests, and God hath lifted them up, and spoken peace to their souls, and granted their desires, and said, as Christ, "Be of good cheer, son, thy sins are forgiven thee;" arise from thy bed of sickness, and walk, and live. How should we know what a tender-hearted Father we have, and how gladly he would meet us, and take us in his arms, if we had not, as the prodigal, been denied the husks of earthly pleasure and profit, which the worldly swine do feed upon? We should never have felt Christ's tender hand, binding up our wounds, and wiping the blood from them, and the tears from our eyes, if we had not fallen into the hands of thieves, and if we had not had tears to be wiped away. We should never have had those sweetest texts in our Bibles, "Come to me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden," &c. and "To every one that is athirst, come and buy freely," &c. and "Blessed are the poor in spirit;" and "Thus saith the High and Lofty One, I dwell with him that is of an humble and contrite spirit," &c.; if we had not been weary, and heavy laden, and thirsty, and poor, and humble, and contrite. In a word, we should all lose our redemption-mercies, our sanctification, justification, and adoption-mercies; our sermon, sacrament, and prayer-mercies; our recoveries, deliverances, and

thanksgiving-mercies, if we had not our miseries and sorrows to occasion them.

3. And it would be our loss for the future, as well as for the present. It is a delight to a soldier, or a traveller, to look back upon his adventures and escapes when they are over; and for a saint in heaven, to look back upon the state he was in on earth, and remember his sins, his sorrows, his fears, his tears, his enemies and dangers, his wants and calamities, must needs make his joys to be, rationally, more joyful. And, therefore, the blessed in their praising of the Lamb, do mention his redeeming them out of every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and so out of their misery and wants, and sins which redemption doth relate to, and making them kings and priests to God. When they are at the end, they look back upon the way. When the fight is done, and the danger over, and their sorrow gone, yet their rejoicing in the remembrance of it, is not done, nor the praises of their Redeemer yet over. But if we should have had nothing but content, and rest on earth, what room would there have been for these rejoicings and praises hereafter? So that you see, 1. It would be our loss. 2. And then our incapacity forbids it, as well as our commodity. We are not capable of rest on earth; or we have both a natural incapacity, and a moral.

1. A natural incapacity, both in regard of the subject and the object; that is, both in regard of our personal unfitness, and the defect or absence of what might be our happiness.

1. Ourselves are now incapable subjects of happiness and rest: and that both in respect of soul and body. 1. Can a soul that is so weak in all grace, so prone to sin, so hampered with contradicting principles and desires, and so nearly joined to such a neighbour as this flesh, have full content and rest in such a case? What is rest, but the perfection of our graces in habit, and in act; to love God perfectly, and know him, and rejoice in him? How then can the Spirit be at rest, that finds so little of this knowledge, and love, and joy? What is the rest but our freedom from sin, and imperfections, and enemies? And can the soul have rest that is pestered with all these, and that continually? What makes the souls of sensible Christians so groan and complain, desiring to be delivered, and to cry out so oft in the language of Paul, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?" If they can be contented, and rest in such a state, what makes every Christian to press hard toward the

mark, and run that they may obtain, and strive to enter in, if they are capable of rest in their present condition? Doubtless, therefore, doth God perfectly purge every soul at its removal from the body, before he receives it to his glory, not only because iniquity cannot dwell with him in the most holy, but, also, because themselves are incapable of the joy and glory, while they have imperfect, sinful souls. The right qualification of our own spirits, for reception and action, is of absolute necessity to our happiness and rest.

2. And our bodies are incapable as well as our souls. They are not now those sun-like bodies which they shall be, when this corruptible hath put on incorruption, and this mortal immortality. They are our prisons, and our burdens; so full of infirmities, and defects, that we are fain to spend the most of our time in repairing them, and supplying their continual wants, and lenifying their grievances. Is it possible that an immortal soul should have rest, in such a rotten, dirty, diseased, wayward, distempered, noisome habitation; when it must every day expect to be turned out, and leave its beloved companion to the worms? Surely these sickly, weary, loathsome bodies must be refined to a perfection suitable thereto, before they can be capable of enjoying rest.

Answ. 2. As we are unfit for rest on earth ourselves, so we want those objects that might afford us content and rest. For, First, Those we do enjoy are insufficient; and, Secondly, That which is sufficient is absent from us. 1. We enjoy the world and its labours, and what fruit they can afford; and, alas! what is in all this to give us rest? They that have the most of it, have the greatest burden, and the least rest of any others. They that set most by it, and rejoice most in it, do all cry out at last of its vanity and vexation. A contentation with our present estate, indeed, we must have; that is, a competent provision in our journey; but not as our portion, happiness, or rest. Men cry out upon one another in these times, for not understanding providences, which are but commentaries on Scripture, and not the text. But if men were not blind, they might easily see that the first lecture that God readeth to us in 'all our late changes, and which providence doth still most inculcate and insist on, is the very same that is the first and greatest lesson in the Scripture; that is, that 'There is no rest nor happiness for the soul, but in God.' Men's expectations are high raised upon every change, and inexperienced fools do promise them-

selves presently a heaven upon earth ; but when they come to enjoy it, it flieth from them, and when they have run themselves out of breath in following this shadow, it is no nearer them than at the first setting out, and would have been as near them if they had sat still : as Solomon's dreamer, they feast in their sleep, but awake hungry. He that hath any regard to the works of the Lord, may easily see that the very end of them is to take down our idols, to weary us in the world, and force us to seek our rest in him. Where doth he cross us most, but where we promise ourselves most content ? If you have one child that you dote upon, it becomes your sorrow. If you have one friend that you trust in, and judge him unchangeable, and think yourself happy in, he is estranged from you, or becomes your scourge. Oh, what a number of these experiences have I had ! Oh, what sweet idolising thoughts of our future estate had we in the time of wars ! And even now where is the rest that I promised my soul ? Even that is my greatest grief, from which I expected most content.

And for this, the greatest shame that ever befell our religion, and the greatest sorrow to every understanding Christian, God hath the solemn thanks of men, as if they begged that he would do so still ; and they rejoice in it, and are heinously offended with those that dare not do so too, and run to God on all their errands. Instead of pure ordinances, we have a puddle of errors, and the ordinances themselves cried down and derided. Instead of the power and plenty of the Gospel, we have everywhere plenty of violent gainsayers and seducers. We have pulpits and pamphlets filled with the most hellish reproachings of the servants and messengers of the most high God ; provoking the people to hate their teachers, slandering them with that venom and impudent falsehood, as if the devil in them were bidding defiance to Christ, and were now entered upon his last and greatest battle with the Lamb ; as if they would justly Rabshakeh, and have Lucian and Julian sainted for the modesty of their reproaches. If a conscionable minister be but in doubt (as knowing himself incapable of understanding state mysteries, and not called to judge of them), and so dare not go whine before God hypocritically in pretended humiliation, nor rejoice and give thanks when men command him, and read their scriptures ; that is, their orders, which ministers were to read on pain of deposition or ejection, as knowing that men are fallible ; and if a man should upon mistake incur the guilt of so heinous inex-

pressible sin, it were a fearful thing :¹ and, therefore, that to go to God doubtingly, or ignorantly, in an extraordinary duty, in a cause of such weight, is a desperate venture, far beyond venturing upon ceremonies, or popish transubstantiation, to say Christ is really present in the bread, for refusing of which the martyrs suffered in the flames ; I say, if he dare not do these, he must part from his dear people, whose souls are more precious to him than his life. Oh ! how many congregations in England have been again forced to part with their teachers in sorrow, not to speak of the ejection of such numbers in our universities ! And for our so-much-desired discipline and holy order, was there ever a people under heaven, who called themselves reformers, that opposed it more desperately, and that vilified it, and railed against it more scurrilously, as if it were but the device of ambitious presbyters, that traitorously sought domination over their superiors, and not the law and order established by Christ ? as if these men had never read the Scriptures, (Heb. xiii. 7, 17 ; 1 Thess. v. 10—12 ; Acts xx. 28 ; 1 Cor. iv. 1 ; Matt. xxiv. 25—27 ; Tit. i. 7 ; 1 Tim. iii. 1, 4—6, iv. 11, v. 17—20,) or will tread in the dirt the laws of Christ, which must judge them. And for railing at the ministers of the Gospel, the pretenders of religion have so far outstripped the former profane ones, that it even woundeth my soul to think of their condition. Oh, where are the tender-hearted mourners that shall weep over England's sins and reproaches ! Is this a place or state of rest ? Hath not God met with our idolatrous setting up of creatures, and taught us that all are not saints that can talk of religion ? much less are these pillars of our confidence, or the instruments to prepare us a rest upon earth. O that all this could warn us to set less by creatures, and at last to fetch our comforts and contentments from our God !

2. And as what we enjoy here is insufficient to be our rest, so God, who is sufficient, is little here enjoyed. It is not here that he hath prepared the presence-chamber of his glory ; he hath drawn the curtain between us and him ; we are far from him as creatures, and farther as frail mortals, and farthest as sinners. We hear now and then a word of comfort from him, and receive his love-tokens, to keep up our hearts and hopes ; but, alas ! this is not our full enjoyment. While we are present

¹ This was written when the usurpers made a war on Scotland, and made orders to sequester all ministers that would not keep days of humiliation and thanksgiving for those wars.

in the body, we are absent from the Lord : even absent while he is present. For though he be not far from us, seeing we live, and move, and have our being in him, who is all in all, (not in all places, but all places in him,) yet have we not eyes now capable of seeing him, for mortals cannot see God and live : even as we are present with stones and trees, but they neither see nor know us. And can any soul that hath made God his portion, and chosen him for his only happiness and rest, (as every one doth that shall be saved by him,) find rest in so vast a distance from him ; and so seldom and so small enjoyment of him ?

3. And lastly, as we are thus naturally incapable, so are we also morally. (Gen. xxxii. 10.) There is a worthiness must go before our rest. It hath the nature of a reward ; not a reward of debt, but a reward of grace. (Rom. iv. 3, 4.) And so we have not a worthiness of debt, or proper merit ; but a worthiness of grace and preparation.^m If the apostles must give their peace and Gospel to the worthy, (Matt. x. 10—13, 37, 38 ; Eph. iv. 1 ; Col. i. 10 ; 1 Thess. ii. 12 ; 2 Thess. i. 11,) Christ will give the crown to none but the worthy ; and those which, by preferring the world before him, do show themselves unworthy, shall not taste of his supper. (Matt. xxii. 8 ; Luke xiv. 24, xx. 35, and xxii. 36 ; 2 Thess. i. 5 ; Acts v. 41.) Yea, it is a work of God's justice, to give the crown to those that overcome : not of his legal, but his evangelical justice, for Christ hath bought us to it, and God hath promised it, and, therefore, in his judiciary process, he will adjudge it them as their due. To those that have fought the good fight, and finished their course, and kept the faith, a crown of righteousness is laid up for them, which the Lord, as a righteous Judge, will give them at that day. (2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.) And are we fit for the crown before we have overcome ; or the prize, before we have run the race ; or to receive our penny, before we have worked in the vineyard ; or to be ruler of ten cities, before we have improved our ten talents ; or to enter into the joy of our Lord, before we have well done as good and faithful servants ; or to inherit the kingdom before we have testified our love to Christ

^m Oportet enim te quidem primo ordinem hominis custodire ; tunc deinde participare gloriæ Dei : non enim tu Deum facis, sed te Deus facit. Si ergo opera Dei es, manum artificis tui expecta, opportune omnia facientem, opportune autem quantum ad te attinet qui efficeris ; præsta ei cor tuum molle et tractabile, et custodi figuram qua te figuravit artifex, habens in temetipso humorem, ne induratus amittas vestigia digitorum ejus. Custodiens compaginationem, ascendens ad perfectum.—*Irenæus advers. Hæres.* lib. iv. c. 76.

above the world, if we have opportunity? Let men cry down works while they please, you shall find that these are the conditions of the crown; so that God will not alter the course of justice to give you rest, before you have laboured; nor the crown of glory, till you have overcome.

You see, then, reason enough why our rest should remain till the life to come. O take heed, then, christian reader, how thou darest to contrive and care for a rest on earth; or to murmur at God for thy trouble and toil, and wants in the flesh. Doth thy poverty weary thee? thy sickness weary thee? thy bitter enemies and unkind friends weary thee? why, it should be so here. Do thy seeing and hearing the abominations of the times, the ruins of the church, the sins of professors, the reproach of religion, the hardening of the wicked, all weary thee? why, it must be so while thou art absent from thy rest. Do thy sins, and thy naughty distempered heart weary thee? I would thou wast wearied with it more. But, under all this weariness, art thou willing to go to God, thy rest; and to have thy warfare accomplished; and thy race and labour ended? If not, O complain more of thy own heart, and get it more weary, till rest seem more desirable.

CHAP. X.

Whether the Souls departed enjoy this Rest before the Resurrection.

SECT. I. I have but one thing more to clear, before I come to the use of this doctrine; and that is, whether this rest remains till the resurrection, before we shall enjoy it; or whether we shall have any possession of it before? The Socinians, and many others of late among us, think the soul separated from the body, is either nothing, or at least not capable of happiness or misery. Truly, if it should be so, it would be somewhat a sad uncomfortable doctrine to the godly at their death, to think of being deprived of their glory till the resurrection; and somewhat comfortable to the wicked to think of tarrying out of hell so long. But I am in strong hopes that this doctrine is false; yea, very confident that it is so. I do believe, that as the soul separated from the body, is not a perfect man, so it doth not enjoy the glory and happiness so fully and so perfectly, as it

shall do after the resurrection, when they are again conjoined. What the difference is, and what degree of glory souls in the mean time enjoy, are too high things for mortals particularly to discern. For the great question, what place the souls of those before Christ, of infants, and all others since Christ, do remain in, till the resurrection? I think it is a vain inquiry of what is yet beyond our reach.ⁿ It is a great question what place is; but if it be only a circumstant body, and if to be in a place, be only to be in a circumstant body, or in the superficies of an ambient body, or in the concavity of that superficies, then it is doubtful whether spirits can be properly said to be in a place. We can have yet no clear conceivings of these things.^o But that separated souls of believers do enjoy inconceivable blessedness and glory, even while they remain thus separated from the body, I prove, as followeth. (Besides all those arguments, for the soul's immortality, which you may read in Alexander Ross's 'Philosophical Touchstone,' part last; and in abundance of writers, metaphysical and theological.)

1. Those words of Paul, (2 Cor. v. 8,) are so exceedingly plain, that I yet understand not what tolerable exception can be made against them. "Therefore, we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: for we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord." (Ver. 6—8.) What can be spoken more plainly. So also verses 1—4 of the same chapter.

2. As plain is that in Phil. i. 23. "For^p I am in a strait

ⁿ It is a doubt, whether to be in place only definitive, and not circumscriptive, do not contradict the definition of place. *Anima dicitur esse in corpore ut suo domicilio. Sed non proprie continetur in corpore, sed potius continet corpus. Et Deus dicitur esse in omnibus locis; sed impropriissime.—Zanch. de Angelis, c. 11. p. (mihi) 87. Vide Twiss against Dr. Jackson, p. 230, and Zanch. tom. 3. c. 11. pp. 86, 87, de Angelis.*

^o Except we return to the opinion of Tertul., and the rest of the ancientest of the fathers, who say that angels and other spirits are but bodies more rare and pure; of which, see learned Zanchius, vol. 1. tom. 8. de Ang. c. 3. q. 66. &c., who determines it as the fathers, that angels are corporeal, in his judgment.

^p Grotius' fancy, that to be with Christ is no more than to be Christi depositum, is evidently vain: for so to be with Christ, would not be best of all, seeing that our mere deliverance from present sufferings is not so great a good as our present life in the service and enjoyment of God in his ordinances and mercies, though accompanied with imperfection and afflictions, except he take a stone or a carcass to be happier than a man. *Non ignoro quid multi è patribus de hac re judicarunt, ut nominatim Irenæus advers. Hæres. lib. v. p. ult. Cum enim Dominus in medio umbræ mortis abierit, ubi animæ mortuorum erant; hinc ita discipulorum ejus propter quos et hæc*

betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better." What sense were in these words, if Paul had not expected to enjoy Christ till the resurrection? Why should he be in a strait, or desire to depart? Should he be with Christ ever the sooner for that? Nay, should he not have been loath to depart upon the very same grounds? For while he was in the flesh, he enjoyed something of Christ; but being departed, (according to the Socinians' doctrine,) he should enjoy nothing of Christ till the day of resurrection.

3. And plain enough is that of Christ to the thief, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise." The dislocation of the words "This day" is but a gross evasion.

4. And surely if it be but a parable of the rich man in hell, and Lazarus; yet it seems unlikely to me, that Christ would teach them by such a parable, what seemed evidently to intimate and suppose the soul's happiness or misery presently after death, if there were no such thing.

5. Doth not this argument against the Sadducees, for the resurrection run upon this supposition, that (God being not the God of the dead, but of the living, therefore) Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were then living, i. e., in soul, and, consequently, should have their bodies raised at the resurrection?

6. Plain also is that in Rev. xiv. 13, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them;" i. e., close as the garments on a man's back follow him, and not at such a distance as the resurrection; for if the

operatus est Dominus, animæ abibunt in invisibilem locum definitum eis à Deo; et ibi usque ad resurrectionem, commorabuntur, sustinentes resurrectionem, post recipientes corpora et perfecte resurgentes, hoc est, corporaliter, quemadmodum Dominus resurrexit; sic venient ad conspectum Dei sicut magister noster non statim evolans abiit; sed sustinet definitum tempus, &c. sic et nos sustinere debemus definitum à Deo resurrectionis nostræ tempus, &c. Hæc recito et errores et patris hujus pro culdubio nævos. E contrario audi Tertulian. Nos autem animam corporalem et hic profitemur, (that was a common error then,) et in suo volumine probamus; habentem proprium genus substantiæ, soliditatis, per quam quid et sentire et pati possit. Nam et nunc animas torqueri, foverique penes inferos, licet nudas, licet adhuc exules carnis, probavit Lazari exemplum.—*Tertullian de Resurrect. Carnis*, c. 17. And Irenæus's own words do confirm the immortality of the soul, and deny not all joy to it before the resurrection, but full joy. And so Origen saith, Ubi è vita Christus excessit, deposito corpore in animam nudam reductus, cum animis etiam corpore vacuis, nudatisque versabatur; ex his ad se revocans quos vel sequi se vellet, vel pro cognitis sibi rationibus aptiores videret ut ad seipsum concitet.—*Origen, cont. Celsum*, lib. ii. fol. (mihi) 22.

blessedness were only in resting in the grave, then a beast or a stone were as blessed; nay, it were evidently a curse, and not a blessing. For was not life a great mercy; was it not a greater mercy to enjoy all the comforts of life; to enjoy the fellowship of the saints, the comfort of the ordinances, and much of Christ in all; to be employed in the delightful work of God, and to edify his church? &c. Is it not a curse to be so deprived of all these; do not these yield a great deal more sweetness, than all the troubles of this life can yield us bitterness? Though I think not, as some,^g that it is better to be most miserable, even in hell, than not to be at all; yet it is undeniable, that it is better to enjoy life, and so much of the comforts of life, and so much of God in comforts and affliction as the saints do, though we have all this with persecution; than to lie rotting in the grave, if that were all we could expect. Therefore it is some further blessedness that is there promised.

7. How else is it said, "that we are come to Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect?" (Heb. xii. 22, 23.) Surely, at the resurrection the body will be made perfect, as well as the spirit. To say (as Lushington doth) that they are said to be made perfect, because they are sure of it as if they had it, is an evasion so grossly contradicting the text, that by such commentaries he may as well deny any truth in Scripture; to make good which, he as much abuseth that of Phil. iii. 12.

8. Doth not the Scripture tell us, that Enoch and Elias are taken up already: and shall we think that they possess that glory alone?

^g Dr. Twiss. See Barlow's 'Exercitat.' post Metaph. Scheib. Jo. Franciscus. Picus Mirand., saith he, heard of a pope that in his life-time told a familiar friend of his, that he believed not the immortality of souls: his friend being dead, appeared to him as he watched, and told him, that his soul which he believed to be mortal, he should, by the just judgment of God, find to be immortal, to his exceeding torment in eternal fire. This pope seemeth to be Leo the Tenth. Vid. Du Plessis' 'Mystery of Iniquity,' p. 641. Polycarpus inter multas præclaras voces quas flammæ admotus edidit, eo die representandum se dixit coram Deo in spiritu. Quod eodem tempore Melito episcopus Sardensis vir parís sinceritatis librum scripsit de corpore et anima, &c. Adeo autem hæc sententia meliore illo seculo valuit, ut Tertullianus reponat eam inter communes et primas animi conceptiones quæ natura communiter apprehenduntur.—*Calv. in Psychopann.* Vide Euseb. Hist. lib. i. c. 15. lit. c.

9. Did not Peter, and James, and John, see Moses also with Christ on the mount? yet the Scripture saith Moses died. And is it likely that Christ did delude their senses, in showing them Moses, if he should not partake of that glory till the resurrection?

10. And is not that of Stephen as plain as we can desire? "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Surely, if the Lord receive it, it is neither asleep, nor dead, nor annihilated; but it is where he is, and beholds his glory.

11. The like may be said of that, "The spirit shall return to God who gave it." (Eccles. xii. 7.)

12. How else is it said, "that we have eternal life already?" (John vi. 54.) And that "the knowledge of God (which is begun here) is eternal life?" (John xvii. 3.) So 1 John v. 13, "And he that believeth on Christ, hath everlasting life. He that eateth this bread shall not die. For he dwelleth in Christ, and Christ in him. And as the Son liveth by the Father, so he that eateth him, shall live by him." (John iii. 36; John vi. 47, 50, 56, 57.) How is "the kingdom of God and of heaven (which is eternal) said to be in us?" (Luke xvii. 21; Rom. xiv. 17: Matt. xiii.)

Surely, if there be so great an interruption of our life as till the resurrection, which with some will be many thousand years, this is no eternal life, nor everlasting kingdom. Lushington's evasion is, "that because there is no time with dead men, but they so sleep that when they awake, it is all one to them as if it had been at first; therefore the Scripture speaks of them as if they were there already." It is true, indeed, if there were no joy till the resurrection, then that consideration would be comfortable; but when God hath thus plainly told us of it before, then this evasion contradicteth the text. Doubtless there is time also to the dead, though, in respect of their bodies, they perceive it not. He will not surely think it a happiness to be putrified or stupified, whilst others are enjoying the comforts of life: if he do, it were the best course to sleep out our lives.

13. In Jude 7, the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah are spoken of, as "suffering the vengeance of eternal fire:" and if the wicked do already suffer eternal fire, then no doubt but the godly do enjoy eternal blessedness. I know some understand the place, of that fire which consumed their bodies, as being a type of the fire of hell: I will not be very confident against this exposition, but the text seemeth plainly to speak more.

14. It is also observable, that when John saw his glorious revelations, he is said to be “in the Spirit,” (Rev. i. 10, and xxi. 10,) and to be “carried away in the Spirit.” (Rev. xvii. 3, and xxi. 10.) And when Paul had his revelations, and saw things unutterable, he knew not whether it were in the body, or out of the body. All implying that spirits are capable of these glorious things, without the help of their bodies.

15. And though it be a prophetical, obscure book, yet it seems to me, that those words in the Revelation do imply this, where John saw the souls under the altar. (Rev. vi. 9, &c.)

16. We are commanded by Christ, “not to fear them that can kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul.” (Luke xii. 4.) Doth not this plainly imply, that when wicked men have killed our bodies, that is, separated the souls from them, yet the souls are still alive?^r

17. The soul of Christ was alive when his body was dead, and therefore so shall ours too; for his created nature was like ours, except in sin. That Christ’s human soul was alive, is a necessary consequent of its hypostatical union with the divine nature, as I judge. And by his words to the thief, “This day shalt thou be with me in paradise:” so also by his voice on the cross, “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.” (Luke xxiii. 46.) And whether that in 1 Pet. iii. 18, 19, that he went and preached to the spirits in prison, &c., will prove it, I leave to others to judge. Read Illyricus’s arguments in his ‘*Clavis Scripturæ*’ on this text. Many think that the opposition is not so irregular, as to put the dative *σαρὶ* for *ἐν σαρκί*, as the subject recipient, and the dative *πνεύματι* for *διὰ πνεύματος*, as the efficient cause; but that it is plainly to be understood as a regular opposition, that Christ was mortified in the flesh, but vivified in the spirit, that is, in the spirit which is usually put in opposition to this flesh, which is the soul, by which spirit, &c. But I leave this as doubtful; there is enough besides.

18. Why is there mention of God’s breathing into man the breath of life, and calling his soul a living soul? There is no mention of any such thing in the creating of other creatures,

^r If you would see this subject handled more fully, and all the arguments answered, which are brought to prove that souls have neither joy nor pain till the resurrection, see Calvin’s treatise hereof, called ‘*Psychopaunychia*,’ and Beckmanni ‘*Exercit.*’ xxiv. D. Jo. Reignoldum ‘*De Lib. Apocryph. Prælect.*’ 79 and 80, and ‘*Prælect.*’ 3, pp. (mihi) 23, 34, &c.

surely, therefore, this makes some difference between the life of our souls and theirs.

19. It appears in Saul's calling for Samuel to the witch, and in the Jews' expectation of the coming of Elias, that they took it for current, then, that Elias and Samuel's souls were living.

20. Lastly: If the spirits of those that were disobedient in the days of Noah, were in prison, (1 Pet. iii. 19,) then certainly the separated spirits in the just, are in an opposite condition of happiness. If any say that the word "prison" signifieth not their full misery, but a reservation thereto, I grant it, yet it importeth a reservation in a living and suffering state, for were they nothing, they could not be in prison.

Though I have but briefly named these twenty arguments,^s and put them together in a narrow room, when some men cannot see the truth without a multitude of words; yet I doubt not but, if you will well consider them, you will discern the clear evidence of scripture verity. It is a lamentable case that the brutish opinion of the soul's mortality, should find so many patrons professing godliness, when there is so clear light of Scripture against them, and when the opinion tends to no other end than the emboldening of sin, the cherishing of security, and the great discomfort and discouragement of the saints, and when many pagans were wiser in this without the help of Scripture: surely, this error is an introduction to paganism itself. Yea more, the most of the nations in the world, even the barbarous Indians do, by the light of nature, acknowledge that, which these men deny, even that there is a happiness and misery which the souls go presently to, which are separated from their bodies. I know the silly, evading answers that are usually given to the forementioned scriptures, which being carried with confidence and subtle words, may soon shake the ordinary sort of Christians that are not able to deal with a sophister. And if they be thoroughly dealt with, they presently appear to be mere vanity or contradiction. Were there but that one text, 2 Cor. v. 8; or that,

^s Dr. J. Reignolds, 'De lib. Apoc. Prælect.' 70, p. (mihi) 946, hath another argument from Col. i. 20. God reconciled by Christ all things to himself, both things in heaven and in earth: nothing in heaven was capable of reconciliation but the souls of the godly, who were then there, but reconciled before, by virtue of Christ's blood afterwards to be shed. Angels were not enemies, devils were hopeless, therefore it must needs be the souls departed which are called "things in heaven reconciled." But of the validity of this argument I have nothing to say, but that I incline to another exposition.

1 Pet. iii. 19; or that, Phil. i. 23; all the seducers in the world could not answer them.

Believe, therefore, steadfastly, O faithful souls, that whatever all the deceivers in the world shall say to the contrary, your souls shall no sooner leave their prisons of flesh, but angels will be their convoy, Christ will be their company, with all the perfected spirits of the just: heaven will be their residence, and God will be their happiness. And you may boldly and believingly, when you die, say, as Stephen, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," and commend it, as Christ did, into a Father's hands.

THE
SAINT'S EVERLASTING REST.

THE THIRD PART.

CONTAINING
SEVERAL USES OF THE FORMER DOCTRINE OF REST.

TO MY DEARLY BELOVED FRIENDS,
THE
INHABITANTS
OF
THE CITY OF COVENTRY,
BOTH MAGISTRATES AND PEOPLE,

RICHARD BAXTER devoteth this part of this Treatise, in thankful acknowledgment of their great affection toward him, and ready acceptance of his labours among them, which is the highest recompense, if joined with obedience, that a faithful minister can expect;

HUMBLY beseeching the Lord on their behalf, that he will save them from that spirit of pride, hypocrisy, dissension, and giddiness, which is of late years gone forth, and is now destroying and making havoc of the churches of Christ; and that he will teach them highly to esteem those faithful teachers whom the Lord hath made rulers over them, (1 Thes. v. 12, 13; Heb. xiii. 7, 17,) and to know them so to be, and to obey them: and that he will keep them unspotted of the guilt of those sins, which in these days have been the shame of our religion, and have made us a scandal or scorn to the world.

THE
SAINT'S EVERLASTING REST.

THE THIRD PART.

CHAP. I.

SECT. I. Whatsoever the soul of man doth entertain, must make its first entrance at the understanding ; which must be satisfied, first of its truth, and, secondly, of its goodness, before it find any further admittance ; if this porter be negligent, it will admit of any thing that bears but the face or name of truth and goodness ; but if it be faithful, able, and diligent in its office, it will examine strictly, and search to the quick ; what is found deceitful, it casteth out, that it go no further ; but what is found to be sincere and current, it letteth in to the very heart, where the will and affections do with welcome entertain it, and by concoction, as it were, incorporate it into their own substance. Accordingly, I have been hitherto presenting to your understandings, first, the excellency of the rest of saints, in the first part of this book ; and then the verity in the second part. I hope your understandings have now tasted this food, and tried what hath been expressed. Truth fears not the light. This perfect beauty abhorreth darkness ; nothing but ignorance of its worth can disparage it. Therefore search, and spare not ; read, and read again, and then judge. What think you ; is it good, or is it not ? nay, is it not the chiefest good ? And is there any thing in goodness to be compared with it ? And is it true, or is it not ? ^a Nay, is there any thing in the world more certain, than that there remaineth a rest to the people of God ? Why,

^a Caveat quisvis Christo fidelis sibi ab impiissimis sermonibus, quibus despicati et profligatissimi quidam homines utantur, dicentes, morte omnia deleri, nullam esse futuram vitam, in alio mundo ; et homines ut pecora morte consumi ; ideoque si corpori belle prospiciatur, animæ abunde prospectum esse, &c. Gravissimis pœnis hujusmodi sermones à Christiano magistratu puniendos esse arbitramur. Etenim si nulla est vita post hanc præsentem, cur, &c. Vide ultra, Bullinger, Corp. Doct. Christian. lib. x. c. 1. p. (mihi) 141.

if your understandings are convinced of both these, I do here, in the behalf of God and his truth, and in the behalf of your own souls, and their life, require the further entertainment hereof; and that you take this blessed subject of rest, and commend it as you have found it to your wills and affections; let your hearts now cheerfully embrace it, and improve it, and I shall present it to you, in its respective uses.

And though the laws of method do otherwise direct me, yet because I conceive it most profitable, I will lay close together in the first place, all those uses that most concern the ungodly, that they may know where to find their lesson, and not to pick it up and down intermixed with uses of another strain. And then I shall lay down those uses that are inore proper to the godly by themselves in the end.

USE I.—*Showing the unconceivable misery of the ungodly in their loss of this Rest.*

Sect. II. And first, If this rest be for none but for the people of God, what doleful tidings is this to the ungodly world! That there is so much glory, but none for them; so great joys for the saints of God, while they must consume in perpetual sorrows! Such rest for them that have obeyed the Gospel; while they must be restless in the flames of hell! If thou who readest these words, art in thy soul a stranger to Christ, and to the holy nature and life of his people, and art not of them who are before described, and shalt live and die in the same condition that thou art now in; let me tell thee, I am a messenger of the saddest tidings to thee, that ever yet thy ears did hear: that thou shalt never partake of the joys of heaven, nor have the least taste of the saints' everlasting rest.^b I may say to thee, as Ehud to Eglon, 'I have

^b Consuevimus nos homines, præsertim qui crassiore mente præditi sumus, metu potius quam beneficiis quod oportet addiscere.—*Theophylact. in Joan.* c. 5, v. 22; *Judg.* ii. 20, 21. Non improbissimi quique tam facile Christianæ doctrinæ subduntur, quam simpliciores et recti, graves alioquin et modesti. Hi namque suppliciorum denunciata formidine, quæ et maxime movet, et ab his, ut caveant admodum exhortantur quorum gratia inseruntur tormenta, exiæ adeo dedere se totos Christianæ disciplinæ nituntur; tantopere nostra hac ipsa detinentur doctrina, æternas veriti pœnas, &c.—*Origen. cont. Celsum, circa fin.* I add these for them that think we should win men to Christ, only by arguments from his love, and not by any mention of hell, which I confess must not be the chief; for terror will not win to love. But yet, 1. Fear, and care, and obedience, are necessary as well as love. 2. God would not have given us mixed affections, if he would not have had us to use them. 3. The doctrine and example of Christ require us to stir up in men both love and fear.

a message to thee from God; but it is a mortal message, against the very life and hopes of thy soul, that, as true as the word of God is true, thou shalt never see the face of God with comfort.' This sentence I am commanded to pass upon thee, from the word: take it as thou wilt, and escape it if thou canst. I know thy humble and hearty subjection to Christ would procure thy escape; and if thy heart and life were thoroughly changed, thy relation to Christ and eternity, would be changed also; he would then acknowledge thee for one of his people, and justify thee from all things that could be charged upon thee, and give thee a portion in the inheritance of his chosen; and if this might be the happy success of my message, I should be so far from repining like Jonas, that the threatenings of God are not executed upon thee, that, on the contrary, I should bless the day that ever God made me so happy a messenger, and return him hearty thanks upon my knees, that ever he blessed his word in my mouth with such desired success. But if thou end thy days in thy present condition, whether thou be fully resolved never to change, or whether thou spend thy days in fruitless proposing to be better hereafter, all is one for that; I say, if thou live and die in thy unregenerate estate, as sure as the heavens are over thy head, and the earth under thy feet; as sure as thou livest, and breathest in this air, so sure shalt thou be shut out of this rest of the saints, and receive thy portion in everlasting fire. I do here expect that thou shouldst, in the pride and scorn of thy heart, turn back upon me, and show thy teeth, and say, 'Who made you the doorkeeper of heaven? When were you there? and, when did God show you the book of life, or tell you who they are that shall be saved, and who shut out?'

I will not answer thee according to thy folly, but truly and plainly as I can discover this thy folly to thyself, that if there be yet any hope, thou mayest recover thy understanding, and yet return to God and live. First, I do not name thee, nor any

(Matt. xxiii., xxv., &c.) Even Dr. Sibbs could say, "Fear is the awe-band of the soul." And Clemens Alexand. Stromat. lib. ii., saith, "Fear and sufferance are the helpers of faith;" they that accuse fear, do reproach the law: and if the law, then it is plain, him also that made the law. And he answers them that say, "Fear is a perturbation, and a declining from reason." And the same Clemens Pædagog. lib. i. c. 9, saith, "As we have all need of a Saviour, so he useth not only gentle and mild remedies, but also sharp doubts; fear doth stop the eating corrosions of the roots of sin." Fear, therefore, is wholesome, though it be bitter.

other : I do not conclude of the persons individually, and say, 'This man shall be shut out of heaven, and that man shall be taken in.' I only conclude it of the unregenerate in general, and of thee conditionally, if thou be such a one. Secondly, I do not go about to determine who shall repent, and who shall not ; much less that thou shalt never repent, and come in to Christ. These things are unknown to me ; I had far rather show thee what hopes thou hast before thee, if thou wilt not sit still and lose them, and by thy wilful carelessness cast away thy hopes ; and I would far rather persuade thee to hearken in time, while there is hope and opportunity and offers of grace, and before the door is shut against thee, that so thy soul may return and live, than to tell thee that there is no hope of thy repenting and returning. But if thou lie, hoping that thou shalt return, and never do it ; if thou talk of repenting and believing, but still art the same ; if thou live and die with the world, and thy credit or pleasure nearer thy heart than Jesus Christ ; in a word, if the foregoing description of the people of God do not agree with the state of thy soul, it is then a hard question, whether thou shalt ever be saved. Even as hard a question as, whether God be true, or the Scripture be his word. Cannot I certainly tell, that thou shalt perish for ever, except I had seen the book of life ? Why, the Bible is also the book of life, and it describeth plainly those that shall be saved, and those that shall be condemned. Though it do not name them, yet it tells you all those signs and conditions by which they may be known. Do I need to ascend up into heaven, to know, "that without holiness none shall see God ;" (Heb. xii. 14 ;) or, "that it is the pure in heart who shall see God ;" (Matt. v. 8 :) or, "that except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God ;" (John iii. 3 :) or, "that he that believeth not (that is, stoops not to Christ as his King and Saviour) is condemned already, and that he shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him ;" (John iii. 18, 36 ;) "and that except you repent, (which includes reformation,) you shall all perish : " (Luke xiii. 3, 5 :) with an hundred more such plain scripture expressions. Cannot these be known without searching into God's counsels ? Why, thou ignorant, or wilful self-deluding sot ! Hath thy Bible lain by thee in thy house so long, and didst thou never read such words as these ; or hast thou read it, or heard it read so often, and yet dost thou not remember such passages as these ? Nay, didst thou not find that the great drift of the

Scripture is, to show men who they are that shall be saved, and who not; and let them see the condition of both estates? And yet dost thou ask me, 'How I know who shall be saved?' What need I go up to heaven to inquire that of Christ, which he came down to earth to tell us; and sent his Spirit in his prophets and apostles to tell us; and hath left upon record to all the world? And though I do not know the secrets of thy heart, and therefore cannot tell thee by name whether it be thy state, or no; yet, if thou art but willing or diligent, thou mayest know thyself, whether thou art an heir of heaven, or not. And that is the main thing that I desire, that if thou be yet miserable, thou mayest discern it, and escape it. But canst thou possibly escape, if thou neglect Christ and salvation? (Heb. ii. 3.) Is it not resolved on, "that if thou love father, mother, wife, children, house, lands, or thine own life, better than Christ, thou canst not be his disciple?" (Matt. x. 31; Luke xiv. 20;) and consequently can never be saved by him. Is this the word of man, or of God? Is it not then an undoubted concluded case, that in the case thou art now in, thou hast not the least title to heaven? Shall I tell thee from the word of God, it is as impossible for thee to be saved, except thou be born again, and be made a new creature, as it is for the devils themselves to be saved? Nay, God hath more plainly and frequently spoken it in the Scripture, that such sinners as thou shall never be saved, than he hath done, that the devils shall never be saved. And doth not this tidings go cold to thy heart? Methinks, but that there is yet life and hope before thee, and thou hast yet time and means to have thy soul recovered, else it should kill thy heart with terror; and the sight of thy doleful, discovered case, should even strike thee dead with amazement and horror. If old Eli fell from his seat and died, to hear that the ark of God was gone, which was but an outward sign of his presence; how then should thy heart be astonished with this tidings, that thou hast lost the Lord God himself, and all thy title to his eternal presence and delight! If Rachel wept for children, and would not be comforted, because they were not; how then shouldst thou now sit down, and weep for the happiness, and future life of the soul, because to thee it is not! When king Belshazzar saw but a piece of a hand sent from God, writing over against him on the wall, it made his countenance change, his thoughts trouble him, his loins loosen in the joints, and knees smite one against another. (Dan. v. 6.) Why, what trembling then should

seize on thee, who hast the hand of God himself against thee; not in a sentence or two only, but in the very tenor and scope of the Scriptures; not threatening thee with the loss of a kingdom only, as he did Belshazzar, but with the loss of thy part in the everlasting kingdom! But because I would fain have thee, if it be possible, to lay it close to thy heart, I will here stay a little longer, and show thee, First, The greatness of thy loss; and, Secondly, The aggravations of thy unhappiness in this loss; Thirdly, And the positive miseries that thou mayest also endure, with their aggravations.

Sect. III. First: The ungodly, in their loss of heaven, do lose all that glorious, personal perfection which the people of God do there enjoy. They lose that shining lustre of the body, surpassing the brightness of the sun at noon-day; though perhaps even the bodies of the wicked will be raised more spiritual, incorruptible bodies, than they were on earth: yet that will be so far from being a happiness to them, that it only makes them capable of the more exquisite torments; their understandings being now more capable of apprehending the greatness of their loss, and their senses more capable of feeling their sufferings. They would be glad, then, if every member were a dead member, that it might not feel the punishment inflicted on it; and if the whole body were a rotten carcass, or might again lie down in the dust and darkness. The devil himself hath an angelical and excellent nature,^c but that only honoureth his skilful Creator, but is no honour or comfort at all to himself; the glory, the beauty, the comfortable perfections, they are deprived of; much

^c Sicut melior est natura sentiens et cum dolet, quam lapis, qui dolere nullo modo potest; ita rationalis natura præstantior est, etiam miseria, quam illa quæ rationis et sensus est expers, et ideo in eam non cadit miseria. Quod cum ita sit, huic naturæ, quæ in tanta excellentia creata est, ut licet ipsa sit mutabilis, inhærendo tamen incommutabili bono, i. e. summo Deo, beatitudinem consequatur, nec expleat indigentiam suam nisi utique beata sit, eique explendæ non sufficiat nisi Deus; profecto non illi adhærere vitium est.—*Aug. de Civit.* lib. xii. c. 1. Anima illic posita bene esse perdidit, at esse non perdidit. Ex qua re semper cogitur, ut et mortem sine morte, et defectum sine defectu, et finem sine fine patiat; quatenus ei et mors immortalis sit, et defectus indeficiens, et finis infinitus.—*Gregor. Dial.* lib. iv. In inferno etsi erit stimulus sanitudinis, nulla ibi erit correctio voluntatis; à quibus ita culpabitur iniquitas, ut nullatenus ab eis possit diligi vel desiderari justitia.—*August. de Fide ad Pet.* Illa est peccati pœna justissima, ut amittat quique quo bene uti noluit, cum sine ulla possit difficultate uti si vellet. Id est autem, ut qui sciens recte non fecit, amittat scire quod rectum sit; et qui rectum facere cum posset noluit, amittat posse cum velit.—*Aug.* lib. iii.; *de Liber. Arbitr.* c. 18.

more do they want that moral perfection which the blessed do partake of: those holy dispositions and qualifications of mind; that blessed conformity to the holiness of God; that cheerful readiness to his will; that perfect rectitude of all their actions: instead of these, they have their old, ulcerous, deformed souls, that perverseness of will, that disorder in their faculties, that loathing of good, that love to evil, that violence of passion, which they had on earth. It is true, their understandings will be much cleared, both by the ceasing of their temptation and deluding objects which they had on earth, as also by the sad experience which they will have in hell, of the falsehood of their former conceits and delusions; but this proceeds not from the sanctifying of their natures; and perhaps their experience and too-late understandings may restrain much of the evil motions of their wills, which they had formerly here on earth; but the evil disposition is never the more changed; so also will the conversation of the damned in hell be void of many of those sins which they commit here on earth. They will be drunk no more, and whore no more, and be gluttonous no more, nor oppress the innocent, nor grind the poor, nor devour the houses and estates of their brethren, nor be revenged on their enemies, nor persecute and destroy the members of Christ: all these, and many more actual sins, will then be laid aside. But this is not from any renewing of their natures; they have the same dispositions still, and fain they would commit the same sins, if they could: they want but opportunity; they are now tied up. It is part of their torment to be denied these their pleasures: no thanks to them, that they sin not as much as ever; their hearts are as bad, though their actions are restrained; nay, it is a great question whether those remainders of good which were left in their natures on earth, as their common honesty and moral virtues, be not all taken from them in hell, according to that, "From him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath." (Matt. iii. 12; Luke viii. 18.) This is the judgment of divines generally; but because it is questionable, and much may be said against it, I will let that pass. But certainly they shall have none of the glorious perfections of the saints, either in soul or body: there will be a greater difference between these wretches and the glorified Christian, than there is betwixt a toad under a sill and the sun in the firmament. The rich man's purple robes and delicious fare did not so exalt him above Lazarus at his door

in scabs, nor make the difference between them so wide, as it is now made on the contrary in their vast separation.

Sect. IV. Secondly : But the great loss of the damned, will be their loss of God ; they shall have no comfortable relation to him, nor any of the saints' communion with him. As they did not like to retain God in their mind, but said to him, " Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways," so God will abhor to retain them in his household, or to give them entertainment in his fellowship and glory.^d He will never admit them to the inheritance of his saints, nor endure them to stand amongst them in his presence ; but bid them, " Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, I know you not." Now, these men dare belie the Lord, if not blaspheme, in calling him by the title of their father. How boldly and confidently do they daily approach him with their lips, and indeed reproach him in their formal prayers, with that appellation, " Our Father ! " As if God would father the devil's children ; or as if the slights of Christ, the pleasures of the flesh, the friends of the world, the haters of godliness, or any that trade in sin, and delight in iniquity, were the offspring of heaven ! They are ready now, in the height of their presumption, to lay as confident claims to Christ and heaven, as if they were sincere believing saints. The swearer, the drunkard, the whoremaster, the worldling, can scornfully say to the people of God, ' What ! is not God our father, as well as yours ? Doth he not love us as well as you ? Will he save none but a few holy precisians ? ' Oh ! but when that time is come, when the case must be decided, and Christ will separate his followers from his foes, and his faithful friends from his deceived flatterers, where then will be their presumptuous claim to Christ ? Then they shall find that God is not their father, but their resolved foe, because they would not be his people, but were resolved in their negligence and wickedness. Then, though they had preached, or wrought miracles in his name, he will not know them : and though they were his brethren or sisters after the flesh, yet he

^d Decem mille qui ponat gehennas, nihil tale dicit quale est à beata gloria excidere, à Christo audire, non novi vos.—*Chrysost. in Mat. Hom. 33.* Multi gehennam abhorrent: ego autem casum illius gloriæ multo amariorem gehennæ par aio.—*Greg.* Nulla major et peior est mors, quam ubi non moritur mors. Sed quod animæ natura per id quod immortalis creata est, sine qualicunque vita esse non potest; summa mors ejus est alienatio à vita Dei in æternitate supplicii.—*Aug. de Civit. lib. vi. c. 12.* Matt. vii. 22, and xxv. 41; Psal. i. 6, 7; xciv. 10, and cxxxii. 3; Rev. xxii. 25.

will not own them, but reject them as his enemies. And even those that did eat and drink in his presence on earth, shall be cast out of his heavenly presence for ever; and those that in his name did cast out devils, shall yet at his command be cast out to those devils, and endure the torments prepared for them. And, as they would not consent that God should by his Spirit dwell in them, so shall not these evil doers dwell with him. The tabernacles of wickedness shall have no fellowship with him; nor the wicked inhabit the city of God: for without are the dogs, the sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers, idolaters, and whatsoever loveth and maketh a lie. For God knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked leads to perishing. God is first enjoyed in part on earth, before he be fully enjoyed in heaven. It is only they that walked with him here, who shall live and be happy with him there. Oh, little doth the world now know what a loss that soul hath, who loseth God! What were the world but a dungeon, if it had lost the sun? What were the body but a loathsome carrion, if it had lost the soul? Yet all these are nothing to the loss of God; even the little taste of the fruition of God, which the saints enjoy in this life, is dearer to them than all the world. As the world, when they feed upon their forbidden pleasures, may cry out with the sons of the prophet, "There's death in the pot!" (2 Kings iv. 40;) so when the saints do but taste of the favour of God, they cry out with David, "In his favour is life!" (Psal. xxx. 5.) Nay, though life be naturally most dear to all men, yet they that have tasted and tried, do say with David, "His loving-kindness is better than life!" (Psalm lxiii. 3.) So that, as the enjoyment of God is the heaven of the saints, so the loss of God is the hell of the ungodly. And, as the enjoying of God is the enjoying of all, so the loss of God is the loss of all.

Sect. V. Thirdly: Moreover, as they lose God, so they lose all those spiritual, delightful affections and actions, by which the blessed do feed on God: that transporting knowledge; those ravishing views of his glorious face;^e the inconceivable pleasure of loving God; the apprehensions of his infinite love to us; the constant joys which his saints are taken up with, and the

^e Quicunque erga eum custodiunt dilectionem, solum his præstat communionem. Quicunque autem absistunt secundum sententiam suam ab eo, his eam quæ electa est ab ipsis separationem inducit. Separatio autem à Deo mors, et separatio lucis tenebræ; et separatio à Deo amissio omnium quæ sunt apud Deum bonorum.—*Arcencus adv. Hæres.* lib. v. c. 27.

rivers of consolation wherewith he doth satisfy them. Is it nothing to lose all this? The employment of a king in ruling a kingdom doth not so far exceed the employment of the vilest scullion or slave, as this heavenly employment exceedeth his.

These wretches had no delight in praising God on earth, their recreations and pleasures were of another nature; and now, when the saints are singing his praises, and employed in magnifying the Lord of saints, then shall the ungodly be denied this happiness, and have an employment suitable to their natures and deserts. Their hearts were full of hell upon earth, instead of God, and his love, and fear, and graces; there was pride, and self-love, and lust, and unbelief: and, therefore, hell must now entertain those hearts which formerly entertained so much of it. Their houses on earth were the resemblance of hell; instead of worshipping God, and calling upon his name, there was scorning at his worship, and swearing by his name: and now hell must therefore be their habitation for ever, where they shall never be troubled with that worship and duty which they abhorred, but join with the rest of the damned in blaspheming that God who is avenging their former impieties and blasphemies. Can it probably be expected, that they who made themselves merry, while they lived on earth, in deriding the persons and families of the godly, for their frequent worshipping and praising God, should at last be admitted into the family of heaven, and join with those saints in those most perfect praises? Surely, without a sound change upon their hearts before they go hence, it is utterly impossible. It is too late then to say, "Give us of your oil, for our lamps are out; let us now enter with you to the marriage feast; let us now join with you in the joyful heavenly melody." You should have joined in it on earth, if you would have joined in heaven. As your eyes must be taken up with other kind of sights, so must your hearts be taken up with other kind of thoughts, and your voices turned to another tune. As the doors of heaven will be shut against you, so will that joyous employment be denied to you. There is no singing the songs of Sion in the land of your thralldom. Those that go down to the pit do not praise him. Who can rejoice in the place of sorrows; and who can be glad in the land of confusion? God suits men's employments to their natures. The bent of your spirits was another way; your hearts were never set upon God in your lives; you were never admirers of his attributes and works, nor ever thoroughly warmed with his

love. You never longed after the enjoyment of him ; you had no delight to speak or to hear of him ; you were weary of a sermon or prayer an hour long ; you had rather have continued on earth, if you had known how ; you had rather yet have a place of earthly preferment, or lands and lordships, or a feast, or sports, or your cups, or whores, than to be interested in the glorious praises of God : and is it meet, then, that you should be members of the celestial quire ? A swine is fitter for a lecture of philosophy, or an ass to build a city or govern a kingdom, or a dead corpse to feast at thy table, than thou art for this work of heavenly praise.

Sect. VI. Fourthly : They shall also be deprived of the blessed society of angels and glorified saints. Instead of being companions of those happy spirits, and numbered with those joyful and triumphing kings, they must now be members of the corporation of hell, where they shall have companions of a far different nature and quality. While they lived on earth, they loathed the saints ; they imprisoned, banished them, and cast them out of their societies, or at least they would not be their companions in labour, and in sufferings ; and, therefore, they shall not now be their companions in their glory ; scorning them and abusing them, hating them, and rejoicing in their calamities, was not the way to obtain their blessedness. If you would have shined with them as stars in the firmament of their Father, you should have joined with them in their holiness, and faith, and painfulness, and patience. You should have first been ingrafted with them into Christ, the common stock, and then incorporated into the fraternity of the members, and walked with them in singleness of heart, and watched with them with oil in your lamps, and joined with them in mutual exhortation, in faithful admonitions, in conscionable reformation, in prayer, and in praise. You should have travelled with them out of the Egypt of your natural estate, through the red sea and wilderness of humiliation and affliction,* and have cheerfully taken up the cross of Christ, as well as the name and profession of Christians, and rejoiced with them in suffering persecution and tribulation. All this, if you had faithfully done, you might now have been triumphing with them in glory, and have possessed with them their Master's joy. But this you could not, you would not endure ; your souls loathed it, your flesh was against it, and that flesh must be pleased, though you were told plainly and frequently what would come of it : and now you partake of the fruit of your folly, and

endure but what you were foretold you must endure; and are shut out of that company, from which you first shut out yourselves; and are separated but from them whom you would not be joined with. You could not endure them in your houses, nor in your town, nor scarcely in the kingdom. You took them as Ahab did Elias, for the troublers of the land; (1 Kings xviii. 17;) and as the apostles were taken for men that turned the world upside down; (Acts xvii. 6;) if any thing fell out amiss, you thought all was long of them. When they were dead or banished, you were glad they were gone, and thought the country was well rid of them. They molested you with their faithful reproving your sin. Their holy conversation did trouble your consciences, to see them so far excel yourselves, and to condemn your looseness by their strictness, and your profaneness by their conscionable lives, and your negligence by their unwearied diligence. You scarcely ever heard them pray or sing praises in their families, but it was a vexation to you; and you envied their liberty in the worshipping of God. And is it, then, any wonder if you be separated from them hereafter? The day is near when they will trouble you no more: betwixt them and you will be a great gulf set, that those that would pass from thence to you (if any had a desire to ease you with a drop of water) cannot; neither can they pass to them who would go from you, for if they could, there would none be left behind. (Luke xvi. 26.) Even in this life, while the saints were imperfect in their passions and infirmities, clothed with the same frail flesh as other men, and were mocked, destitute, afflicted, and tormented, yet, in the judgment of the Holy Ghost, they were such, of whom the world was not worthy. (Heb. xi. 36—38.) Much more unworthy are they of their fellowship in their glory.

CHAP. II.

The Aggravation of the Loss of Heaven to the Ungodly.

SECT. I. I know many of the wicked will be ready to think, if this be all, they do not much care, they can bear it well enough: what care they for losing the perfections above? What care they for losing God, his favour, or his presence? They lived merrily without him on earth, and why should it be so grievous to be without him hereafter? And what care they for being deprived of that love, and joy, and praising of God?

They never tasted sweetness in the things of that nature. Or what care they for being deprived of the fellowship of angels and saints? They could spare their company in this world well enough, and why may they not be without it in the world to come? To make these men, therefore, to understand the truth of their future condition, I will here annex these two things:

1. I will show you why this fore-mentioned loss will be intolerable, and will be most tormenting then, though it seem as nothing now.

2. I will show you what other losses will accompany these; which, though they are less in themselves, yet will now be more sensibly apprehended by these sensual men: and all this from reason, and the truth of Scripture:

1. Then, That this loss of Heaven will be then most tormenting, may appear by these considerations following:

First: The understandings of the ungodly will be then cleared, to know the worth of that which they have lost. Now, they lament not their loss of God, because they never knew his excellency, nor the loss of that holy employment and society, for they were never sensible what they were worth.^f A man that hath lost a jewel, and took it but for a common stone, is never troubled at his loss; but when he comes to know what he lost, then he lamenteth it. Though the understandings of the damned will not then be sanctified (as I said before), yet will they be cleared from a multitude of errors which now possess them, and mislead them to their ruin. They think now that their honour with men, their estates, their pleasures, their health and life, are better worth their studies and labour than the things of another world which they never saw; but when these things, which had their hearts, have left them in misery, and given them the slip in their greatest need; when they come to know by experience the things which before they did but read and hear of, they will then be quite in another mind. They would not believe that water would drown, till they were in the sea; nor that the fire would burn, till they were cast into it; but when they feel it, they will easily believe. All that error of their mind, which made them set light by God, and abhor his worship, and vilify his people, will then be confuted and removed by experience; (Eccles. i. 18;) their knowledge shall be

^f *Ignis gehennæ lucebit miseris ut videant unde doleant, ad tormentum, et non ad consolationem, ne videant unde gaudeant.*—*Isidor. de Sum. Bon. lib. i.*

increased, that their sorrows may be increased ; as Adam by his fall did come to the knowledge of good and evil, so shall all the damned have this increase of knowledge. As the knowledge of the excellency of that good which they do enjoy, and of that evil which they have escaped, is necessary to the glorified saints, that they may rationally and truly enjoy their glory ; so the knowledge of the greatness of that good which they have lost, and of that evil which they have procured to themselves, is necessary to the tormenting of these wretched sinners : for as the joys of heaven are not so much enjoyed by the bodily senses, as by the intellect and affections ; so it is by understanding their misery, and by affections answerable, that the wicked shall endure the most of their torments : for as it was the soul that was the chiefest in the guilt (whether it be positively, by leading to sin, or only privatively, in not keeping the authority of reason over sense, that the understanding is most usually guilty, I will not now dispute), so shall the soul be chiefest in the punishment ; doubtless, those poor souls would be comparatively happy, if their understandings were wholly taken from them, if they had no more knowledge than idiots or brute beasts ; or if they knew no more in hell than they did upon earth, their loss and misery would then less trouble them. Though all knowledge be physically good, yet some may be neither morally good, nor good to the owner. Therefore, when the Scripture saith of the wicked, “ that they shall not see life,” (John iii. 36,) nor “ see God,” (Heb. xii. 14,) the meaning is, they shall not possess life, or see God, as the saints do, to enjoy him by that sight ; they shall not see him with any comfort, nor as their own ; but yet they shall see him, to their terror, as their enemy ; and, I think, they shall have some kind of eternal knowledge or beholding of God and heaven, and the saints that are there happy, as a necessary ingredient to their unutterable calamity. The rich man shall see Abraham and Lazarus, but afar off : (Luke xvi. 23 :) as God beholdeth them afar off, (Psal. cxxxviii. 6,) so shall they behold God afar off. O, how happy men would they think themselves, if they did not know that there is such a place as heaven ;^g or if they could but shut their eyes, and cease to behold it ! Now, when their knowledge

^g Charron ‘ of Wisdom,’ lib. i. c. 16. p. 69, tells of a man who, having his eyes covered to receive death, and uncovered again to receive his pardon, was found dead on the scaffold. If the imagination can kill, how will the apprehension of real helpless misery torment !

would help to prevent their misery, they will not know, or will not read and study that they may know; therefore, then when their knowledge will but feed their consuming fire, they shall know whether they will or not. As toads and serpents know not their own vile and venomous nature, nor the excellent nature of man, or other creatures, and therefore are neither troubled at their own, nor desirous of ours, so is it with the wicked here; but when their eyes at death shall be suddenly opened, then the case will be suddenly altered. They are now in a dead sleep, and they dream they are the happiest men in the world, and that the godly are but a company of precise fools, and that either heaven will be theirs, as sure as another's, or else they may make a shift without it as they have done here; but when death smites these men, and bids them awake, and arouses them out of their pleasant dreams, how will they stand up amazed and confounded; how will their judgments be changed in a moment; and they that would not see, shall then see, and be ashamed!

Sect. II. Another reason to prove that the loss of heaven will more torment them then, is this; because as the understanding will be cleared, so it will be more enlarged, and made more capacious to conceive of the worth of that glory which they have lost. The strength of their apprehensions, as well as the truth of them, will then be increased. What deep apprehensions of the wrath of God, or the madness of sinning, of the misery of sinners, have those souls that now endure this misery, in comparison of those on earth that do but hear of it! What sensible apprehensions of the worth of life hath the condemned man that is going to be executed, in comparison of what he was wont to have in the time of his prosperity; much more will the actual deprivation of eternal blessedness make the damned exceedingly apprehensive of the greatness of their loss; and as a large vessel will hold more water than a shell, so will their more enlarged understandings contain more matter to feed their torment, than now their shallow capacity can do.

Sect. III. And as the damned will have clearer and deeper apprehensions of the happiness which they have lost, so will they have a truer and closer application of this doctrine to themselves, which will exceedingly tend to increase their torment. It will then be no hard matter to them to say, 'This is my loss, and this is my everlasting remediless misery.' The want of this is the main cause why they are now so little trou-

bled at their condition ; they are hardly brought to believe that there is such a state of misery, but more hardly to believe that it is likely to be their own. This makes so many sermons to them to be lost and all threatenings and warnings to prove in vain.^h Let a minister of Christ show them their misery ever so plainly and faithfully, and they will not be persuaded that they are so miserable : let him tell them of the glory they must lose, and the sufferings they must feel, and they think it is not they whom he means ; such a drunkard, or such a notorious sinner, they think may possibly come to such a doleful end, but they little think that they are so near it themselves. We find in all our preaching, by sad experience, that it is one of the hardest things in the world to bring a wicked man to know that he is wicked ; and a man who is posting in the way to hell, to know that he is in that way indeed ; or to make a man see himself in a state of wrath and condemnation : yea, though the preacher do mark him out by such undoubted signs, which he cannot deny, yet he will not apply them, nor be brought to say, ‘It is my case ;’ though we show them the chapter and verse where it is written, “that without regeneration and holiness, none shall see God ;” and though they know no such work that was ever wrought upon themselves ; nay, though they might easily find by their strangeness to the new birth, and by their very enmity to holiness, that they were never partakers of them, yet do they as verily expect to see God, and to be saved, as if they were the most sanctified persons in the world. ⁱIt is a most difficult work to make a proud person know that he is

^h Usitatum generis humani vitium est libendo peccatum committere, commissum negando abscondere, et convictum defendendo excusare.—*Greg. Moral.* lib. xxii. Superbus vult se credi constantem, prodigus liberalem, avarus diligentem, temerarius fortem, inhumanus parcum, ignavus quietum, timidus cautum.—*Prosp.* Hoc enim maximum est vitium, quo laborat humanitas, ut post peccatum suum, maxime ad excusationis refugium, quasi pœnitudinis se confessione prosternat ; quod facinus inter summa peccata constat numeratum esse, quia inde nascitur, ut ad pœnitentiam reus tardius venire videatur.—*Greg. Moral.* John iii. 3 ; Heb. xii. 14. Cœpisti non defendere peccatum tuum ? jam inchoasti justitiam.—*Aug. de Carne Serm.* 4.

ⁱ Fevers and gouts are felt and known when they are strong, though we doubt of them before ; but in the diseases which hurt men’s souls, it is contrary. The worse a man is, the less he feels it, and no wonder. For he that doth but slumber and dream, doth sometime think in his sleep that he is asleep ; but a deep sleep expelleth dreams, and drowns the mind so deeply that it leaves no use of the understanding. Why doth no man confess his faults ? Because he is yet in them. To rehearse a dream, is the work only of a man that is waking ; and to confess one’s faults, is a sign of recovery.—*Epist.* 54. *ad Lucil.* p. 616.

proud, or a covetous man to know that he is covetous; or an ignorant, or erroneous heretical man to know himself to be such an one indeed; but to make any of these to confess the sin, and to apply the threatening, and to believe themselves the children of wrath, this is to human strength an impossibility. How seldom do you hear men, after the plainest discovery of their condemned estate, to cry out and say, 'I am the man;' or to acknowledge, that if they die in their present condition, they are undone for ever! and yet Christ hath told us in his word, that the most of the world are in that estate; yea, and the most of those that have the preaching of the Gospel; "for many are called, but few are chosen." So that it is no wonder that the worst of men are not now troubled at their loss of heaven, and at their eternal misery; because, if we should convince them by the most undeniable arguments, yet we cannot bring them to acknowledge it: if we should preach to them as long as we live, we cannot make them believe that their danger is so great; except a man rise from the dead, and tell them of that place of torments, and tell them that their merry, jovial friends, who did as verily think to be saved as they, are now in hell in those flames, they will not believe. Nay, more, though such a messenger from the dead should appear, and speak to them, and warn them that they come not to that place of torments, and tell them, that such and such of their dear, beloved, worshipful, or honourable friends are now there destitute of a drop of water, yet would they not be persuaded by all this; for Christ hath said so, "that if they will not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one should rise from the dead." (Luke xvi. 31.)

There is no persuading them of their misery till they feel it, except the Spirit of the Almighty persuade them.

Oh! but when they find themselves suddenly in the land of darkness, perceive, by the execution of the sentence, that they were indeed condemned, and feel themselves in the scorching flames, and see that they are shut out of the presence of God for ever, it will then be no such difficult matter to convince them of their misery: this particular application of God's anger to themselves, will then be the easiest matter in the world; then they cannot choose, but know and apply it, whether they will or not. If you come to a man that hath lost a leg, or an arm, or a child, or goods, or house, or his health, is it a hard matter to bring this man to apply, and to

acknowledge that the loss is his own? I think not. Why, it will be far more easy for the wicked in hell to apply their misery in the loss of heaven, because their loss is incomparably greater. Oh! this application, which now, if we should die, we cannot get them to, for prevention of their loss will then be part of their torment itself; O that they then could say, 'It is not my case!' but their dolorous voices will then roar out these forced confessions, 'Oh, my misery! oh, my folly! oh, my inconceivable, irrecoverable loss.'

SECT. IV. Again, as the understandings and consciences of sinners will be strengthened against them, so also will their affections be then more lively and enlarged than now they are; as judgment will be no longer blinded, nor conscience stifled and bribed as now it is, so the affections will be no longer so stupified and dead. A hard heart now makes heaven and hell to seem but trifles: and when we have showed them everlasting glory and misery, they are as men half asleep, they scarcely take notice what we say; our words are cast as stones against a hard wall, which fly back in the face of him that casteth them, but make no impression at all where they fall. We talk of terrible, astonishing things, but it is to dead men that cannot apprehend it. We may rip up their wounds, and they never feel us; we speak to rocks, rather than to men; the earth will as soon tremble as they.^k Oh, but when these dead wretches are revived, what passionate sensibility; what working affections; what pangs of horror; what depth of sorrow will there then be! How violently will they fly in their own faces; how will they rage against their former madness! The lamentations of the most passionate wife for the loss of her husband, or of the tenderest mother for the loss of her children, will be nothing to theirs for the loss of heaven. Oh, the self-accusing and self-tormenting fury of those forlorn wretches! How they will even tear their own hearts, and be God's executioner upon themselves! I am persuaded, as it was none but themselves that committed the sin, and themselves that were the only meritorious cause of their sufferings, so themselves will be the chiefest executioners of those sufferings. God will have it for the clearing of his justice, and the aggravating of their distress; even Satan himself, as he was not so great a cause of their sinning as

^k Maxima est factæ injuriæ pœna, fecisse; nec quis quam gravius afficitur, quam qui ad supplicium pœnitentiæ trahitur.—*Senec. de Ira*, lib. iii. c. 26.

themselves, so will he not be so great an instrument as themselves of their torment. And let them not think here, that if they must torment themselves, they will do well enough, they shall have wit enough to ease and favour themselves, and resolution enough to command down this violence of their passions. Alas ! poor souls, they little know what passions those will be, and how much beyond the power of their resolutions to suppress ! Why have not lamenting, pining, self-consuming persons on earth, so much wit or power as this ? Why do you not thus persuade despairing souls, who lie, as Spira, in a kind of hell upon earth, and dare not eat, nor drink, nor be merry, but torment themselves with continual terrors ? Why do you not say to them, ‘ Sir, why will you be so mad as to be your own executioner ? And to make your own life a continual misery, which otherwise might be as joyful as other men’s ? Cannot you turn your thoughts to other matters, and never think of heaven or hell ? ’ Alas ! how vain are all these persuasions to him ; how little do they ease him ! You may as well persuade him to remove a mountain, as to remove these hellish thoughts that feed upon his spirit ; it is as easy to him to stop the stream of the rivers, or to bound the overflowing waves of the ocean, as to stop the stream of his violent passions, or to restrain those sorrows that feed upon his soul. Oh, how much less, then, can those condemned souls, who see the glory before them which they have lost, restrain their heart-rending, self-tormenting passions ! So some direct to cure the tooth-ache, ‘ Do not think of it, and it will not grieve you ; ’ and so these men think to ease their pains in hell. Oh, but the loss and pain will make you think of it, whether you will or not. You were as stocks or stones under the threatenings, but you shall be most tenderly sensible under the execution. Oh, how happy would you think yourselves then, if you were turned into rocks, or any thing that had neither passion nor sense ! Oh, now, how happy were you, if you could feel as lightly as you were wont to hear ! And if you could sleep out the time of execution, as you did the time of the sermons that warned you of it ! But your stupidity is gone, it will not be.

Sect. V. Moreover, it will much increase the torment of the damned, in that their memories will be as large and strong as their understandings and affections, which will cause those violent passions to be still working. Were their loss ever so great, and their sense of it ever so passionate, yet if they could

but lose the use of their memory, those passions would die, and that loss being forgotten, would little trouble them. But as they cannot lay by their life and being, though then they would account annihilation a singular mercy ; so neither can they lay aside any part of that being. Understanding, conscience, affections, memory, must all live to torment them, which should have helped to their happiness. And as by these they should have fed upon the love of God, and drawn forth perpetually the joys of his presence ; so by these must they now feed upon the wrath of God, and draw forth continually the dolours of his absence : therefore never think, that when I say the hardness of their hearts, and their blindness, dulness, and forgetfulness, shall be removed, that, therefore, they are more holy or more happy than before : no, but morally more vile, and hereby far more miserable. Oh, how many hundred times did God by his messengers here call upon them, ‘Sinners, consider whither you are a going !’ Do but make a stand a while, and think where your way will end, what is the offered glory that you so carelessly reject : will not this be bitterness in the end ?

And yet these men would never be brought to consider ; but in the latter days, (saith the Lord, Jer. xxiii. 20,) they shall perfectly consider it ; when they are ensnared in the work of their own hands, (Psal. ix. 16,) when God hath arrested them, and judgment is passed upon them, and vengeance is poured out upon them to the full, then they cannot choose but consider it, whether they will or not. Now, they have no leisure to consider, nor any room in their memories for the things of another life. Ah ! but then they shall have leisure enough, they shall be where they have nothing else to do but consider it ; their memories shall have no other employment to hinder them, it shall even be engraven upon the tables of their hearts. (Deut. vi. 9.) God would have had the doctrine of their eternal state to have been written on the posts of their doors, on their houses, on their hands, and on their hearts : he would have had them mind it, and mention it, as they rise and lie down, as they sit at home, and as they walk abroad, that so it might have gone well with them at their latter end. And seeing they rejected this counsel of the Lord, therefore shall it be written always before them in the place of their thralldom, that which way soever they look, they may still behold it.

Among others, I will briefly lay down here some of those

considerations which will thus feed the anguish of these damned wretches.

Sect. VI. First : It will torment them to think of the greatness of the glory which they have lost. Oh, if it had been that which they could have spared, it had been a small matter ; or if it had been a loss repairable with any thing else ; if it had been health, or wealth, or friends, or life, it had been nothing ; but to lose that exceeding, eternal weight of glory !

Sect. VII. Secondly : It will torment them also, to think of the possibility that once they were in of obtaining it. Though all things considered, there was an impossibility of any other event than what did befall, yet the thing in itself was possible, and their will was left to act without constraint.¹ Then they will remember, the time was, when I was in as fair a possibility of the kingdom as others ; I was set upon the stage of the world, if I had played my part wisely and faithfully, now I might have had possession of the inheritance : I might have been amongst yonder blessed saints, who am now tormented with these damned fiends !^m The Lord did set before me life and death, and having chosen death, I deserve to suffer it : the prize was once held out before me ; if I had run well, I might have obtained it ; if I had striven, I might have had the mastery ; if I had fought valiantly, I had been crowned.

Sect. VIII. Thirdly : It will yet more torment them to remember, not only the possibility, but the great probability that once they were in, to obtain the crown, and prevent the misery.ⁿ It will then wound them to think, Why, I had once the gales of the Spirit ready to have assisted me. I was fully purposed to have been another man, to have cleaved to Christ, and to have forsaken the world ; I was almost resolved to have been wholly for God ; I was once even turning from my base, seducing lusts ; I was purposed never to take them up again, I had

¹ Non satis acute igitur Hieronymus ad Ctesiph. advers. Pelagian. fol. (mihi) 117. Rogo quæ est ista argumentatio, posse esse quod nunquam fuerit ?

^m Actus eveniens est evitabilis secundum se, inevitabilis vero secundum quod est prævisus ; at licet hoc sit verum, tamen non solvit nodum, quia actus eveniens est jam de facto prævisus ab æterno ; nec quietat intellectum, qui hic in ignorantia sola quietem invenit, inquit Cajetanus super Tho. i. p. q. 20. art. 4.

ⁿ O vere reconciliatio facilis sed perutilis ! quam facilis modo, tam difficilis erit postea : et sicut modo nemo est qui reconciliari non possit : ita post paululum nemo qui possit ; quoniam sicut benignitas apparuit ultra omnem spem, ultra omnem æstimationem ; similem expectare possumus judicii districtiorem.

—Bern. *Serm.* 1. in *Epiphan.*

even cast off my old companions, and was resolved to have associated myself with the godly; and yet I turned back, and lost my hold, and broke my promises, and slacked my purposes; almost God had persuaded me to be a real Christian, and yet I conquered those persuasions. What workings were in my heart, when a faithful minister pressed home the truth! O, how fair was I once for heaven! I had almost had it, and yet I have lost it; if I had but followed on to seek the Lord, and brought those beginnings to maturity, and blown up the spark of desires and purposes which were kindled in me, I had now been blessed among the saints.

Thus will it wound them, to remember what hopes they once had, and how a little more would have brought them over to Christ, and have set their feet in the way of peace.

Sect. IX. Fourthly: Furthermore, it will exceedingly torment them, to remember the fair opportunity that once they had, but now have lost;° to look back upon an age spent in vanity, when his salvation lay at the stake; to think how many weeks, and months, and years, did I lose, which, if I had improved, I might now have been happy! Wretch that I was! Could I find no time to study the work, for which I had all my time? Had I no time among all my labours to labour for eternity? Had I time to eat, and drink, and sleep, and work, and none to seek the saving of my soul? Had I time for sports, and mirth, and vain discourse, and none for prayer, or meditation on the life to come? Could I take time to look to my estate in the world, and none to try my title to heaven, and to make sure of my spiritual and everlasting state? Oh, pernicious time, whither art thou fled? I had once time enough, and now I must have no more! I had so much, that I knew not what to do with it; I was fain to devise pastimes; and to talk it away, and trifle it away, and now it is gone, and cannot be recalled!^p Oh, the

° Stultæ valetudinis fructus est peccatum.—*Nazianzen.*

^p Æternum Dei qui fugiunt lumen, quod continet in se omnia bona, ipsi sibi causa sunt, ut æternas inhabitent tenebras; destituti omnibus bonis, sibi met-ipsis causa hujusmodi habitationis facti.—*Irenæus adv. Hæres. lib. iv. c. 76.* Here no man is hindered by sins repented of, or by age, from obtaining salvation. While a man is in this world, no true repentance is too late. The passage to God's mercy is still open; and to them that seek and understand the truth, the access is easy. If thou ask pardon of thy sins at the very time of thy death, and in the passage of thy temporal life, and implore the true and only God in confession and believing acknowledgment of him; pardon shall be given thee by the goodness of God on thy confessing, and saving indulgence, and thou shalt pass immediately from death to immortality. This grace doth Christ bestow; this gift of his mercy he giveth, by subduing death in the

golden hours that I did enjoy ! Had I spent but one year of all those years, or but one month of all those months, in thorough examination, and unfeigned conversion, and earnest seeking God with my whole heart, it had been happy for me that ever I was born ; but now it is past, my days are cut off, my glass is run, my sun is set, and will rise no more. God himself did hold me the candle, that I might do his work, and I loitered till it was burnt out ; and now fain would I have more, but cannot : oh, that I had but one of these years to live over again ! Oh, that it were possible to recall one day, one hour, of that time ! Oh, that God would turn me into the world, and try me once again, with another lifetime ! how speedily would I repent : how earnestly would I pray : and lie on my knees day and night : how diligently would I hear : how cheerfully would I examine my spiritual estate : how watchfully would I walk : how strictly would I live ! but, it is now too late ; alas ! too late ; I abused my time to vanity whilst I had it, and now must I suffer justly for that abuse.

Thus will the remembrance of the time which they lost on earth, be a continual torment to these condemned souls.

Sect. X. Fifthly : And yet more will it add to their calamity, to remember how often they were persuaded to return, both by the ministry in public, and in private, by all their godly, faithful friends ; every request and exhortation of the minister, will now be as a fiery dart in his spirit ; how fresh will every sermon come now into his mind ! even those that he had forgotten, as soon as he heard them. He even seems to hear still the voice of the minister, and to see his tears ; oh, how fain would he have had me to have escaped these torments ! How earnestly did he entreat me ! With what love and tender compassion did he beseech me ! How did his bowels yearn after me ! And yet I did but make a jest of it, and hardened my heart against all this. How oft did he convince me that all was not well with me ! And yet I stifled all these convictions. How plainly did he rip up my sores, and open to me my very heart, and show me the unsoundness and deceitfulness of it ! and yet I was loth to know the worst of myself, and therefore shut mine eyes, and

trophy of his cross, by redeeming the believer by the price of his blood, by reconciling man to God the Father, and by quickening the mortal by heavenly regeneration.—*Cyprian. ad Demetrian.* p. 331. Can there be a fuller testimony against purgatory, or necessity of meritorious works, with many the like popish doctrines, when this was written by Cyprian to a bloody, persecuting pagan ?

would not see. Oh, how glad would he have been, after all his study, and prayers, and pains, if he could but have seen me cordially entertain the truth, and turn to Christ! He would have thought himself well recompensed for all his labours and sufferings in his work, to have seen me converted and made happy by ^a it. And, did I withstand and make light of all this? Should any have been more willing of my happiness than myself? Had not I more cause to desire it than he? Did it not more nearly concern me? It was not he, but I, that was to suffer for my obstinacy. He would have laid his hands under my feet, to have done me good; he would have fallen down to me upon his knees to have begged my obedience to his message, if that would have prevailed with my hardened heart. O, how deservedly do I now suffer these flames, who was so forewarned of them, and so entreated to escape them: nay, my friends, my parents, my godly neighbours, did admonish and exhort me; they told me what would come of my wilfulness and negligence at last, but I did never believe them, nor regard them. Magistrates were fain to restrain me from sinning, by law and punishment. Was not the foresight of this misery sufficient to restrain me?

Thus will the remembrance of all the means that ever they enjoyed, be fuel to feed the flames in their consciences. Oh, that sinners would but think of this, when they sit under the plain instruction and pressing exhortations of a faithful ministry! How dear must they pay for all this, if it do not prevail with them! And how they will wish a thousand times, in the anguish of their souls, that they had either obeyed his doctrine, or had never heard him! The melting words of exhortation which they were wont to hear, will be hot burning words to their hearts upon this sad review. It cost the minister dear, even his daily study, his earnest prayers, his compassionate

^a Make your life doleful, and Christ will make your death doleful, be as great as you will: stay long in the birth, and kill the midwife, and you will be delivered in hell. Ease us, and ease Christ, for Christ striveth in us.—*Lockier in Col. i. 29*, p. 530. When I hear men under all the means that we enjoy, yet think that their ignorance should excuse them, it maketh me think of the answer of the agent of Charles V., emperor, to the ambassador of Siena. The Sienois having rebelled against the emperor, sent their ambassador to excuse it; who, when he could find no other excuse, thought in a jest to put it off thus: "What," saith he, "shall not we of Siena be excused, seeing we are known to be all fools?" The agent replied, "Even that shall excuse you but upon the condition which is fit for fools, which is, to be kept bound and enchained.—*Lord Remy's Civil Considerations*, c. 76. p. 200

sorrows for their misery, his care, his sufferings, his spendings, weakening, killing pains; but, oh! how much dearer will it cost these rebellious sinners! His lost tears will cost them blood, his lost sighs will cost them eternal groans, and his lost exhortations will cause their eternal lamentations. For Christ hath said it, "that if any city or people receive not, or welcome not the Gospel,^r the very dust of the messenger's feet who lost his travel to bring them that glad tidings, shall witness against them; much more, his greater pains. And it shall be easier for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city." (Matt. xix. 14—16.) That Sodom which was the shame of the world for unnatural wickedness, the disgrace of mankind, that would have committed wickedness with the angels from heaven, that were not ashamed to prosecute their villany in the open street; that proceeded in their rage against Lot's admonitions; yea, under the very miraculous judgment of God, and groped for the door, when they were stricken blind. That Sodom which was consumed with fire from heaven, and turned to that deadly sea of waters, and suffers the vengeance of eternal fire; (Jude v. 7;) even that Sodom shall escape better in the day of judgment, than the neglecters of this so great salvation. (Heb. ii. 3.) It will somewhat abate the heat of their torment, that they had not those full and plain offers of grace, nor those constant sermons, nor pressing persuasions, nor clear convictions, as those under the sound of the Gospel have had. I beseech thee who readest these words, stay here awhile, and sadly think of what I say; I profess to thee from the Lord, it is easier thinking of it now than it will be then. What a doleful aggravation of thy misery would this be, that the food of thy soul should prove thy bane. And that that should feed thy everlasting torment, which is sent to save thee, and prevent thy torments.

Sect. XI. Sixthly: Yet further,^u it will much add to the torment of the wretches, to remember that God himself did

^r Mundus eum non cognovit; ut possit secundum hoc dici, redemptor mundi dedit pro mundo sanguinem suum, et mundus redimi noluit; quia lucem tenebræ non receperunt.—*Prosper. Respons. ad c. 9. Gallor.*

^s Subjectio autem Dei requies est æterna; ut hi qui fugiunt lumen, dignum fugæ suæ habeant locum, et qui fugiunt æternam requiem, congruentem fugæ suæ habeant habitationem. Cum autem apud Deum omnia sint bona, qui ex sua sententia fugiunt Deum, semetipsos ab omnibus fraudant bonis. Fraudati autem omnibus erga Deum bonis, consequenter in justam Dei judicium incident. Qui enim fugiunt Requiem, juste in pœna conservabuntur; et qui fugerunt lumen, juste inhabitabunt tenebras.—*Iren. adv. Hæres. lib. iv. c. 76.*

condescend to entreat them, that all the entreatings of the minister were the entreatings of God. How long he did wait, how freely he did offer, how lovingly he did invite, and how importunately he did solicit them! How the Spirit did continue striving with their hearts, as if he were loth to take a denial! How Christ stood knocking at the door of their hearts, sermon after sermon, and one Sabbath after another, crying out, "Open, sinner, open thy heart to the Saviour, and I will come in, and sup with thee, and thou with me." (Rev. iii. 20.) Why, sinner,^t are thy lusts and carnal pleasures better than I? Are thy worldly commodities better than my everlasting kingdom? Why, then, dost thou resist me? Why dost thou thus delay? What dost thou mean, that thou dost not open to me? How long shall it be till thou attain to innocency? How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee? Wo to thee, O unworthy sinner! Wilt thou not be made clean? Wilt thou not be pardoned and sanctified, and made happy? When shall it once be? Oh! that thou wouldst hearken to my word, and obey my Gospel!^u Then should thy peace be as the river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea; though thy sins were as red as the crimson or scarlet, I would make them as white as the snow or wool. O that thou wert but wise to consider this; and that thou wouldst in time remember thy latter end, before the evil days come upon thee, and the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say of all thy vain delights, 'I have no pleasure in them!' Why, sinner, shall thy Maker thus bespeak thee in vain? Shall the God of all the world beseech thee to be happy, and beseech thee to have pity upon thine own soul, and wilt thou not regard him? Why did he make thy ears, but to hear his voice? Why did he make thy understanding, but to consider? Or thy heart, but to entertain the Son in obediential love? "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Consider thy ways." (Hag. i. 5.)

Oh, how all these passionate pleadings of Christ will passion-

^t *Satanas fecit, dicit peccator, ipse mihi persuasit; quasi Satanus habeat potestatem cogendi! Astutiam suadendi habet; sed si Satanus loqueretur, et taceret Deus, haberes unde te excusares. Modo aures tuæ positæ sint inter monentem Deum, et suggerentem serpentem, quare huc flectuntur, hinc avertuntur? Non cessat Satanus suadere malum, sed nec Deus cessat admonere bonum; Satanus autem non cogit invitum; in tua potestate est, consentire aut non consentire.—August. Enarrat. in Psal. xci.; Hos. viii. 5; Jer. iv. 14, and xiii. 27.*

^u *Psal. lxxxi. 13, 14; Isai. xlviii. 17, 18, and i. 18; Deut. xxxii. 29; Eccles. xii. 1.*

ately transport the damned with self-indignation, that they will be ready to tear out their own hearts! How fresh will the remembrance of them be still in their minds, lancing their souls with renewed torments! What self-condemning pangs will it raise within them, to remember how often Christ would have gathered them to himself, even as the hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but they would not! (Matt. xxvii. 37.) Then will they cry out against themselves, 'Oh, how justly is all this befallen me! Must I tire out the patience of Christ? Must I make the God of heaven to follow me in vain, from home to the assembly; from thence to my chamber; from alehouse to alehouse, till I had wearied him with crying to me, 'Repent, return!' Must the Lord of all the world thus wait upon me, and all in vain? Oh, how justly is that patience now turned into fury, which falls upon my soul with irresistible violence! When the Lord cried out to me, in his word, 'How long will it be before thou wilt be made clean and holy?' my heart, or at least my practice, answered, 'Never, I will never be so precise.' And now when I cry out, 'How long will it be till I be freed from this torment, and saved with the saint?' how justly do I receive the answer, 'Never, Never!' O sinner, I beseech thee for thy own sake; think of this for prevention while the voice of mercy soundeth in thine ears! Yet patience continueth waiting upon thee; canst thou think it will do so still? Yet the offers of Christ and life are made to thee in the Gospel, and the hand of God is stretched out to thee; but will it still be thus? The Spirit hath not yet done striving with thy heart, but dost thou know how soon he may turn away, and give thee over to a reprobate sense, and let thee perish in the stubbornness and hardness of thy heart? Thou hast yet life, and time, and strength, and means, but dost thou think this life will always last? "Oh! seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near." (Isa. lv. 6, 7.) He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what Christ now speaketh to his soul. (Rev. ii. and iii.) And to-day, while it is called to-day, harden not your hearts, lest he swear in his wrath that you shall never enter into his rest. (Heb. iii. 8, 11, 15.) For ever blessed is

* Lex jubere novit; gratia juvare. Nec lex juberet, nisi esset voluntas; nec gratia juvaret, si sat esset voluntas. Jubetur ut faciamus bonum et non faciamus malum; et tamen pro his oratur, &c. Sicut ergo agnoscimus voluntatem cum hæc præcipiuntur; sic et ipse agnoscat gratiam cum petuntur.—*Aug. Epist. 95.*

he that hath a hearing heart and ear, while Christ hath a calling voice.

Sect. XII. Seventhly : Again, it will be a most cutting consideration to those damned sinners to remember on what easy terms they might have escaped their misery, and on what easy conditions the crown was tendered to them. If their work had been to remove mountains, to conquer kingdoms, to fulfil the law to the smallest tittle, then the impossibility would somewhat assuage the rage of their self-accusing conscience ; if their conditions for heaven had been the satisfying of justice for all their transgressions, the suffering of all that the law did lay upon them, or bearing the burden which Christ was fain to bear, why this were nothing but to suffer hell to escape hell ; but their conditions were of another nature : ^y the yoke was light, and the burden was easy, which Jesus Christ would have laid upon them ; his commandments were not grievous. (Matt. xi. 28, 29 ; 1 John v. 3.) It was but to repent of their former transgressions, and cordially to accept him for their Saviour and their Lord ; to study his will, and seek his face ; to renounce all other happiness but that which he procureth us, and to take the Lord alone for our supreme Good ; to renounce the government of the world and the flesh, and to submit to his meek and gracious government ; to forsake the ways of our own devising, and to walk in his holy, delightful way ; to engage ourselves to this by covenant with him, and to continue faithful in that covenant : these were the terms on which they might have enjoyed the kingdom ; and was there any thing unreasonable in all this, or had they any thing to object against it ? Was it a hard bargain to have heaven upon these conditions, when all the price that is required is only our accepting it in that way that the wisdom of our Lord thinks meet to bestow it ? And for their want of ability to perform this, it consisteth chiefly in their want

^y As voluntary election is the principle of action, so faith is found to be the principle of action, the foundation of prudence, choice, &c. All propriety and difference of faith and unbelief, would neither be liable to praise nor dispraise, if they had a foregoing natural necessity, arising from him who is omnipotent. If we are drawn by natural operations, as by ropes, like things that have no life, then it is in vain to talk of involuntary or voluntary ; nor do I understand that to be a living creature, whose power of desire is subject to necessity. But for us who have learned from the Scripture that God hath given men to choose and avoid things by a free and absolute power, let us rest in the judgment of faith, which cannot be moved, or fail us, manifesting a cheerful and ready spirit, because we have chosen life, &c.—*Clem. Alex. Stromat. lib. ii. prope init.*

of will.² If they were but willing, they should find that God would not be backward to assist them : if they be willing, Christ is much more willing.

Oh ! when the poor tormented wretch shall look back upon these easy terms which he refused, and compare the labour of them with the pains and loss which he there sustaineth, it cannot be now conceived how it will rent his very heart. Ah ! thinks he, how justly do I suffer all this, who would not be at so small a cost and pains to avoid it ! Where was my understanding when I neglected that gracious offer ; when I called the Lord a hard master, and thought his pleasant service to be a bondage, and the service of the devil and my flesh to be the only delight and freedom ! Was I not a thousand times worse than mad when I censured the holy way of God as needless preciseness, and cried out on it as an intolerable burden ; when I thought the laws of Christ too strict, and all too much that I did for the life to come ! Oh ! what had all the trouble of duty been in comparison of the trouble that I now sustain ; or all the sufferings for Christ and well-doing, in comparison of these sufferings that I must undergo for ever ! What, if I had spent my days in the strictest life that ever did saint ; what, if I had lived still upon my knees ; what, if I had lost my credit

² The feud is as mortal about this question, between the papists themselves, as us ; and for all the means to silence it, breaks out again as hot as ever ; as you may see in August. 'Yprens. Apol.' and Theriaca Vincentii Leria ; and the answer of Petavius and Ricardus to it. All men can, if they will, believe in God, and convert themselves from the love of visible and temporal things, to the keeping of his commandments.—*Aug. de Gen. cont. Manich.* c. 3. It is a certain truth, that men can do this if they will ; but the will is prepared by the Lord.—*Aug. Retract.* lib. i. c. 10. exponeus locum priorem. All men have power to believe, if they will ; but actuality, or will, is from that grace which is proper to the faithful.—*Aug. de Prædest. Sanct.* c. 5. There is a first power which the will commandeth : this we deny not to be in the most wicked men, and contemnners of God. We can worship God if we will, and thence it is that God is just in pronouncing sentence against sinners ; for, what hindereth us but we may obey ? Certainly it is not the want of any faculty which the will commandeth, as oft as it impelleth us to do what we willed ; else it were no sin to us, as if a man would fain relieve the poor, and cannot. If our disability were such, it were a calamity, not a vice ; but there is a disability which is in the will itself, which is indeed a sin, and spreads itself far and wide. When we say, therefore, that there are many that cannot be good men, we would not be so understood, as if we meant, as if there were any that could not be a good man, and yet would, &c.—*Camero Prælect. ad Phil.* ii. 12, 13, operum fol. p. 340. Voluntas libera tanto liberior quanto divinæ gratiæ misericordiæque subiectioni ; ut August. 'Epist.' 89. Perhaps some such tolerable sense may be put on Clem. Alexand.'s words, who so oft saith over and over, that to believe and obey is in our own power.—*Stromat.* lib. vi. vii. et passim.

with men, and been hated of all men for the sake of Christ, and borne the reproach and scorn of the foolish ; what, if I had been imprisoned, or banished, or put to death ; oh ! what had all this been to the miseries that I now must suffer ! Then had my sufferings now been all over, whereas they do but now begin, but will never end. Would not the heaven which I have lost, have recompensed all my losses ; and should not all my sufferings have been there forgotten ? What, if Christ had bid me do some great matter, as to live in continual tears and sorrow, to suffer death a hundred times over, which yet he did not, should I not have done it ? How much more when he said, ‘ But believe and be saved ; seek my face, and thy soul shall live ; love me above all, walk in my sweet and holy way, take up thy cross and follow me, and I will save thee from the wrath of God, and I will give thee everlasting life ? ’ Oh, gracious offer ! Oh, easy terms ! Oh, cursed wretch, that would not be persuaded to accept them !

Sect. XIII. Eighthly : Furthermore, this also will be a most tormenting consideration, to remember what they sold their eternal welfare for, and what it was that they had for heaven. When they compare the value of the pleasures of sin with the value of the recompense of reward, which they forsake for those pleasures, how will the vast disproportion astonish them ! To think of a few merry hours, a few pleasant cups or sweet morsels, a little ease or low delight to the flesh, the applauding breath of the mouth of mortal men, or the possession of so much gold on earth,^a and then to think of the everlasting glory ; what a vast difference between them will then appear ! To think this is all I had for my soul, my God, my hopes of blessedness, it cannot possibly be expressed how these thoughts will tear his very heart ! Then will he exclaim against his folly, ‘ Oh ! deservedly miserable wretch, did I set my soul to sale at so base a price ; did I part with my God for a little dirt and dross,^b and sell my Saviour, as

^a Avarus potius vult in inferno æternaliter comburi, quam hæreditatem falsè acquisitam minui vel injustè retentam restituere.—*Alex. Fabri. in De-struct. Vitiorum*, part. iv. c. 2. m.

^b Lutum est divitiarum propriissimum epitheton ; ut lutum enim in plateis à pedibus ambulantium conculcatur, ita Deus in pœnis opes vel maximas dispergit et delet.—*Hogan. in Habac.* 2. p. 400. Avarus est pueris similis papilioes sequentibus, magna negligentibus.—*Fab.* ubi sup. l. Cæterum non leviter peccat in Dominum, qui cum æmulo ejus diabolo pœnitentiâ renunciasset, et hoc nomine illum Domino subjecisset, rursus eundem regressu suo erigit ; et exultationem ejus seipsum facit, ut denuo malus, recuperata præda sua adversus Dominum gaudeat. Nunc, quod dicere periculosum est, sed

Judas, for a little silver ! Oh, for how small a matter have I parted with my happiness ! I had but a dream of delight for my hopes of heaven ; and now I am awaked, it is all vanished ! Where are now my honours and attendance ? Who doth applaud me, or trumpet out my praises ? Where is the cap and knee that was wont to do me reverence ? My morsels are now turned to gall, and my cups to wormwood. They delighted me no longer than while they were passing down : when they were past my taste, the pleasure perished ; and is this all that I have had for the inestimable treasure ? Oh, what a mad exchange did I make ! What, if I had gained all the world, and lost my soul, would it have been a saving match ? But, alas ! how small a part of the world was it for which I gave up my part in glory ! Oh ! that sinners would forethink of this when they are swimming in delights of flesh, and studying to be rich and honourable in the world ; when they are desperately venturing upon known transgression, and sinning against the checks of conscience !

Sect. XIV. Ninthly : Yet much more will it add unto their torment, when they consider that all this was their own doings,^c

ad ædificationem proferendum est, diabolus Domino præponit ? Comparationem enim videtur egisse qui utrumque cognoverit, et judicato pronunciasse eum meliorem cujus se rursus esse maluerit.—*Tertul. lib. de Pœnitent. c. 5. p. edit. Pamel.* 119.

^c Ille qui non consequitur eam, sibi met suæ imperfectionis est causa. Nec enim lumen deficit propter eos, qui semetipsos excæcaverunt. Sed illo perseverante quale et est, excæcati per suam culpam in caligine constituuntur. Neque lumen cum magna necessitate subjiciet sibi quenkam ; neque Deus cogit eum qui nolit continere ejus artem. Qui igitur abstiterunt à paterno lumine, et transgressi sunt legem libertatis, per suam abstiterunt culpam, liberi arbitrii et suæ potestatis facti. Deus autem omnia præsciens utrisque aptas præparavit habitationes : eis quidem qui inquirunt lumen incorruptibilitatis, et ad id recurrunt, benigne donans hoc quod concupiscunt lumen ; aliis vero id contemnentibus et avertentibus se ab eo, et id fugientibus, et quasi seipsos excæcantibus, congruentes luminis adversantibus præparavit tenebras ; et his qui fugiunt ei esse subjecti, convenientem subdidit pœnam.—*Iren. adv. Hæres. lib. iv. c. 76.* As if a man be armed all over, yet it is left in his own will, either to use his arms to fight and strive with the enemy, and carry the victory, or else to love and make peace with his enemy, and not to fight for all he is armed ; so Christians that have put on perfect virtue, and have got the heavenly armour, if they will, they may be delighted in Satan, and make peace with him, and forbear war : for nature is changeable ; and if a man will, he may be the son of God ; if not, the son of death ; because there remains to us our free will or choice.—*Macarius in Hom. xxvii. p. 336.* Yet this doth not intimate any sufficiency without grace. Austin himself, and all the fathers, and all divines, acknowledge *liberum arbitrium*, free will or choice, who yet plead most for a necessity of grace.

Qua petiit rutilans opum splendore bonorum,

Quæ Deus in nobis veluti sua dona coronat.

and that they, most wilfully, did procure their own destruction. Had they been forced to sin whether they would or not, it would much abate the rage of their consciences ; or if they were punished for another man's transgressions, or if any other had been the chiefest author of their ruin ; but to think that it was the choice of their own wills, and that God had set them in so free a condition that none in the world could have forced them to sin against their wills ; this will be a griping thought to their hearts. What, thinks this wretched creature ! Had I not enemies enough in the world, but I must be enemy to myself ? God would neither give the devil nor the world so much power over me as to force me to commit the least transgression. If I had not consented, their temptations had been in vain : they could but entice me ; it was myself that yielded ; and that did the evil : and must I needs lay hands upon my own soul, and imbrue my hands in my own blood ? Who should pity me, who pitied not myself, and who brought all this upon mine own head ? When the enemies of Christ did pull down his word and laws, his ministry and worship, the news of it did rejoice me ; when they set up seducing or ungodly ministers, instead of the faithful preachers of the Gospel, I was glad to have it so ; when the minister told me the evil of my ways, and the dangerous state that my soul was in, I took him for my enemy, and his preaching did stir up my hatred against him, and every sermon did cut me to the heart, and I was ready to gnash my teeth in indignation against him. Never was I willing of the means of mine own welfare ; never had I so great an enemy as myself ; never did God do me any good, or offer me any for the welfare of my soul, but I resisted him, and was utterly unwilling of it. He hath heaped mercy upon me, and renewed one deliverance after another, and all to entice my heart unto him, and yet was I never heartily willing to serve him : he hath gently chastised me, and made me groan under the fruit of my disobedience ; and yet, though I promised largely in my affliction, I was never unfeignedly willing to obey him. Never did a good magistrate attempt a reformation, but I was against it ; nor a good minister labour the saving of the flock, but I was ready to hinder as much as I could ; nor a good Christian labour to save his soul, but I was ready to discourage and hinder him to my power ; as if it were

*Liberum enim arbitrium divina ita gratia semper
Adjuvat, ut sine ea sit inanis cuncta potestas.*

Ut canit Eucharius Gaudensis in 'Vita Dionysii Carthusiani' ante ejus opera.

not enough to perish alone, but I must draw all others to the same destruction. Oh, what cause hath my wife, my children, my servants, my neighbours, to curse the day that ever they saw me ! As if I had been made to resist God, and to destroy my own and other men's souls, so have I madly behaved myself ! Thus will it gnaw upon the hearts of these wretches, to remember that they were the cause of their own undoing ; and that they wilfully and obstinately persisted in their rebellion, and were mere volunteers in the service of the devil. They would venture ; they would go on ; they would not hear him that spoke against it : God calleth to them to hear and stay, but they would not ; men called, conscience called, and said to them, as Pilate's wife, (Matt. xvii. 19,) ' Have nothing to do with that hateful sin, for I have suffered many things because of it ; ' but they would not hear : their will was their law, their rule, and their ruin.

Sect. XV. Tenthly, and lastly : It will yet make the wound in their consciences much deeper, when they shall remember that it was not only their own doing, but that they were at so much cost and pains for their own damnation.^d What great undertakings did they engage in to effect their ruin ; to resist God, to conquer the Spirit, to overcome the power of mercies, judgments, and the word itself, to silence conscience ; all this they did take upon them, and perform. What a number of sins did they manage at once ! What difficulties did they set upon ! even the conquering the power of reason itself. What dangers did they adventure on ! Though they walked in continual danger of the wrath of God, and knew he could lay them in the dust in a moment ; though they knew they lived in danger of eternal perdition, yet would they run upon all this. What did they forsake for the service of Satan, and the pleasures of sin ? They forsook their God, their conscience, their

^d Cupiditas mundi initium habet ex arbitrio voluntatis, progressum ex jucunditate voluptatis, et firmamentum ex vinculo consuetudinis.—*Aug.* lib. i. *de Patientia*, c. 7. Est quippe anima condita libera potestque bona ut eligere, ita et adversari. Quum igitur quod bonum est refugiat, necessario contraria cogitat ; quiescere enim à motu omnino non prævalet, cum sit, ut dixi naturaliter mobilis. Agnoscens verò arbitrii sui libertatem, conspicit se posse in utramque partem membris corporis uti, sive ad ea quæ sunt, sive ad ea quæ non sunt. Sunt quippe bona ; non sunt autem mala.—*Athanas.* *cont. Gent.* lib. i. Neque enim malum in Deo est, neque per seipsum omnino subsistit. Alioqui bonus non esset, si vel permixtam haberet contrariam naturam, vel causa esset mali.—*Athanas.* ubi supra. Veritas sententiæ ecclesiasticæ per se elucet. Malum scilicet neque à Deo, neque in Deo, neque ab initio fuisse ; ne illam quidem ipsius mali esse substantiam ; sed homines per privationem boni sibi, quæ non sunt, et quæ volunt, cœpisse confingere. Vid. ultra in Athanasio ibid.

best friends, their eternal hopes of salvation, and all. They that could not tell how to forsake a lust, or a little honour or ease for Christ, yet can lose their souls; and all for sin! Oh, the labour that it costeth poor wretches to be damned! Sobriety they might have at a cheaper rate, and a great deal of health and ease to boot; and yet they will rather have gluttony and drunkenness, with poverty, and shame, and sickness, and belchings, and vomitings; with the outcries and lamentations of wife and children, and conscience itself. Contentedness they might have with ease and delight, yet will they rather have covetousness and ambition, though it cost them study, and care, and fears, and labour of body and mind, and a continual unquietness and distraction of spirit, and usually a shameful overthrow at the last. Though their anger be nothing but a tormenting themselves, and revenge and envy do consume their spirits, and keep them upon a continual rack of disquiet; though uncleanness destroy their bodies, and estates, and names; and though they are foretold of the hazard of their eternal happiness, yet will they do and suffer all this, rather than suffer their souls to be saved. How fast runs Gehazi for his leprosy! What cost and pains is Nimrod at, to purchase a universal confusion! How doth an amorous Ammon pine himself away for a self-destroying lust! How studiously and painfully doth Absalom seek a hanging! Ahitophel's reputation and his life must go together. Even when they are struck blind by a judgment of God,^e yet how painfully do the Sodomites grope and weary themselves to find the door! What cost and pains are the idolatrous papists at, for their multifarious will-worship! How unweariedly and unreservedly have the enemies of the Gospel put out the light that should guide them to heaven, and how earnestly do they still prosecute it to the last! How do the nations generally rage, and the people imagine a vain thing! The kings of the earth setting themselves, and the rulers taking counsel together, against the Lord, and against his Christ; that they may break the bonds of his laws asunder, and cast away the cords of his government from them, though he that sitteth in heaven do laugh them to scorn, though the

^e Gen. xix. 11. As Phocion, when being condemned to die, his fellows had drunk up all the poison before him, so that he could not have any except he would pay for it a dear price, he desires his friend to pay for it, quoniam Athenis ne mori quidem gratis licet; so because God in mercy hath resolved that no man shall be damned except he buy it with his sinful labour, they will pay the price rather than escape.—Phil. ii. 12.

Lord have them in derision; though he speak to them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure, and resolve that yet in despite of them all, 'He will set his King upon his holy hill of Sion,' yet will they spend and tire themselves out as long as they are able to stir against the Lord. O how the reviews of this will feed the flames in hell! With what rage will these damned wretches curse themselves, and say, 'Was damnation worth all my cost and pains; was it not enough that I perished through my negligence, and that I sit still while Satan played his game, but I must seek so diligently for my own perdition; might I not have been damned on free cost, but I must purchase it so dearly? I thought I could have been saved without so much ado; and could I not have been destroyed without so much ado? How well is all my care, and pains, and violence, now requited! Must I work out so laboriously my own damnation, when God commanded me to work out my salvation?'^f Oh! If I had done as much for heaven as I did for hell, I had surely had it! I cried out of the tedious way of godliness, and of the painful course of duty and self-denial; and yet I could be at a great deal more pains for Satan, and for death. If I had loved Christ as strongly as I did my pleasures, and profits, and honours, and thought on him as often, and sought him as painfully, O how happy had I now been! But justly do I suffer the flames of hell, who would rather buy them so dear, than have heaven on free-cost, when it was purchased to my hands.'

^f Though I am no Arminian, yet I detest their doctrine and way of preaching on the other extreme, who teach men to lay the chief cause of their sin and damnation from themselves on God; and would have wicked men believe, that none but the elect do sin against the price that was paid for them, and the Christ that died for them; and so would quiet their consciences in hell, as if they were not guilty of any such sin. And the doctrine of a physical, active predetermination of man's will to sin, or the act which is sinful by God's effectual influx, hath need of a wary consideration. And though Twisse and other learned men assert it, yet ordinary Christians need not put it into their creed. May not all common Christians well take up with a contented ignorance here, when Cajetan could find rest nowhere? and Arriba, that reproveth him, saith in a manner as much.—Lib. i. c. 30. p. 188. And our learned Barlow takes up with this: *De futuritione mali, presertim moralis, statuunt alii; non ego: qui rem tot difficultatibus perplexam determinare nec volo nec valeo. Solum hoc firmum maneat et immotum; nempe mali moralis futuritionem ita statuendam, ut hypotheses nostræ peccati originem in Deum non rejiciant. Si quidem spuria illa et deformis soboles nostri progenies est, non Dei; qui peccatum placido vultu nec videt quidem, nedum faciat. Scilicet insaniam ethnicorum superlativam arguit, quod Jovem Deum agnoverunt et adulterum, ut Minutius. et miratur Athenagoræ, qui fieri*

Thus I have showed you some of those thoughts which will aggravate the misery of these wretches for ever. O that God would persuade thee, who readest these words, to take up these thoughts now seasonably and soberly, for the preventing of that inconceivable calamity, that so thou mayst not be forced, in despite of thee, to take them up in hell as thy own tormentor.

It may be some of these hardened wretches will jest at all this, and say, 'How know you what thoughts the damned in hell will have?'

Ans. First: Why read but the 16th of Luke, and you shall there find some of their thoughts mentioned.

Secondly: I know their understanding will not be taken from them, nor their conscience, nor passions. As the joys of heaven are chiefly enjoyed by the rational soul, in its rational actions, so also must the pains of hell be suffered. As they will be men still, so will they act as men.

Thirdly: Besides, Scripture hath plainly foretold us as much, that their own thoughts shall accuse them, (Rom. ii. 15,) and their hearts condemn them; (1 John iii. 19—21;) and we see it begun in despairing persons here.

CHAP. III.

They shall lose all things that are comfortable, as well as Heaven.

SECT. I. Having showed you those considerations which will then aggravate their misery, I am next to show you their addi-

potuit, ut illum tanquam Deum colerent, quem et ἐπικλοπον et ὑπέρθυμον, furem et superbum cognoverunt. Certe Deus non est, nisi omnino bonus, malitia nulla vitiatus. Recte Nazianzi episcopus, ἀναμάρτητος ὁ Θεός, Deus peccati nesciens. Cum impossibile est ut vitiis succumbat ipsa bonitas, &c.—*Banlow Exercitat.* 5. p. 127. Nullo modo cogimur, aut retenta præscientiâ Dei tollere voluntatis arbitrium; aut retento voluntatis arbitrio, Deum (quod nefas est) negare præscium futurorum. Sed utrumque amplectimur; utrumque fideliter et veraciter confitemur; illud, ut bene credamus; hoc, ut bene vivamus; male autem vivitur, si de Deo non bene credere.—*Aug. de Civ. lib. v. c. 10.* Quisquis audet dicere, 'Habeo ex meipso fidem, non ergo accepi,' profecto contradicit huic apertissimæ veritati, 'Quid habes quod non accepisti?' Non quia credere vel non credere non est in arbitrio voluntatis humanæ; sed in electis præparatur voluntas à Domino. Ideo ad ipsam quoque fidem, quæ in voluntate est, pertinet "Quis te discernit?"—*Aug. de Prædest. Sanct. c. 5.*

tional losses which will aggravate it.^g For as godliness hath the promise both of this life and that which is to come, and as God hath said, "that if we first seek his kingdom and righteousness, all things else shall be added to us;" so also are the ungodly threatened with the loss both of spiritual and of corporal blessings; and because they sought not first Christ's kingdom and righteousness, therefore shall they lose both it and that which they did seek, and there shall be taken from them even that little which they have. If they could but have kept their present enjoyments, they would not have much cared for the loss of heaven, let them take it that have more mind of it: but catching at the shadow, and losing the substance, they now find that they have lost both; and that when they rejected Christ, they rejected all things. If they had lost and forsaken all for Christ, they would have found all again in him; for he would have been all in all to them; but now they have forsaken Christ for other things, they shall lose Christ, and that also for which they did forsake him.

But I will particularly open to you some of their other losses.

Sect. II. First: They shall lose their present presumptuous conceit and belief of their interest in God, and of his favour towards them, and of their part in the merits and sufferings of Christ. This false belief doth now support their spirits, and defend them from the terrors that would else seize upon them, and fortify them against the fears of the wrath to come. Even as true faith doth afford the soul a true and grounded support and consolation, and enableth us to look to eternity with undaunted courage; so also a false ungrounded faith doth afford a false ungrounded comfort, and abates the trouble of the considerations of judgment and damnation. But, alas! this is but a palliate salve, a deceitful comfort; what will ease their trouble when this is gone? When they can believe no longer, they will be quieted in mind no longer, and rejoice no longer. If a man be near to the greatest mischief, and yet strongly conceit that he is in safety, his conceit may make him as cheerful as if all were well indeed, till his misery comes, and then both his con-

^g It is a great question with many, whether there be no mercy in hell. Aquinas (1 q. 21 a. 4, 1 m.) saith there is; so Lorinus, Par. Cajetan. Frnardentius, Salmeron; also Ursin, Cat., with some of ours; but I say, as Jac. Laurentius, in 'Jac.' (2, 13), What need is there curiously to inquire, or boldly to determine in this? It is enough to know that the pains and torments of hell to the wicked, will be both eternal and incomprehensible. (p. 165.)

ceit and comforts vanish. An ungrounded persuasion of happiness, is a poor cure for real misery. When the mischief comes, it will cure the misbelief; but that belief can neither prevent nor cure the mischief. If there were no more to make a man happy, but to believe he is so, or shall be so, happiness would be far commoner than now it is likely to be. It is a wonder that any man who is not a stranger both to Gospel and reason, should be of the Antinomian faith in this; ^h who tell us, that faith is but the believing that God loveth us, and that our sins are already pardoned through Christ; that this is the chief thing that ministers should preach; that our ministers preach not Christ, because they preach not this; that every man ought thus to believe, but no man to question this faith, whether he believe truly or not, &c. But if all men must believe that their sins are pardoned, then most of the world must believe a lie; and if no man ought not to question the truth of his faith, then most men shall rest deluded with an ungrounded belief. The Scripture commandeth us first to believe for a remission of sins, before we believe that our sins are remitted. If we believe in Christ, that is, accept him cordially for our Saviour, and our King, then we shall receive the pardon of sins. The truth is, we have more ado to preach down this Antinomian faith, than they have to preach it up; and to preach our people from such a believing, than they have to preach them to it. I see no need to persuade people to believe; the generality are strong and confident in such a belief already. Take a congregation of five thousand persons, and how few among them all will you find, that do not believe that their sins are pardoned, and that God loves them; especially of the vilest sinners, who have least cause to believe it! Indeed, as it is all the work of those men to persuade people to this belief, so it is the hardest task almost that we meet with, to convince men of the ungroundedness of this belief, and to break that peace which Satan maintaineth in their souls. Nei-

^h Indeed, to speak the plain truth, that which the presumptuous conceit to be true, justifying faith, viz., a believing that our sins are pardoned before they are; that is, upon our bare receiving Christ as a Saviour to justify us, before we receive him as Lord to rule us; this is truly a believing the devil, the father of lies, and not God; yea, against God. And it is a resting on the deceiving promise of the devil for justification: and are not such likely to be well justified by their accuser? Nay, it is a making the devil their God, by taking his word, who tells them they shall be justified and saved by a bare expecting justification and salvation from Christ, when God telleth them the contrary. Tertullian saith, *Per diversitatem enim promissionum, diversitas insinuat Deorum.*—*Tertul. Lib. de Resurrect. Carn. c. 2. p. 407.*

ther do I know a commoner cause of men's destruction, than such a misbelief. Who will seek for that which he believes he hath already? This is the great engine of hell, to make men go merrily to their own perdition. I know men cannot believe Christ, or believe in or upon Christ, either too soon or too much. But they may believe or judge that themselves are pardoned, adopted, and in favour with God, too soon, and too much: for a false judgment is always too much and too soon. As true grounded faith is the master-grace in the regenerate, and of the greatest use in the kingdom of Christ; so is false ungrounded faith the master-vice in the unregenerate soul, and of greatest use in the kingdom of Satan. Why do such a multitude sit still, when they might have pardon for the seeking, but that they verily think they are pardoned already? Why do men live so contentedly in the power of the devil, and walk so carelessly in the certain way to hell; but that they think their way will have no such end, and that the devil hath nothing to do with them? They defy him, they spit at the mention of his name. If you could ask so many thousands as are now in hell, 'What madness could cause you to come hither voluntarily, or to follow Satan to this place of torment, when you might follow Christ to the land of rest?' they would most of them answer you, 'We believed that we had followed towards salvation; and that the way which we were in, would have brought us to heaven. We made sure account of being saved, till we found ourselves damned; and never feared hell, till we were suddenly in it; we would have renounced our sinful courses and companions, but that we thought we might have them and heaven too. We would have sought after Christ more heartily, but that we thought we had part in him already. We would have been more earnest seekers of regeneration, and the power of godliness, but that we verily thought we were Christians before. Oh! if we had known as much as now we know, what lives would we have led, what persons would we have been! But we have flattered ourselves into these insufferable torments. We were told of this before, from the word of God, but we would not believe it till we felt it; and now there is no remedy.' Reader, do but stop, and think here with thyself, how sad a case is this; that men should so resolutely cheat themselves of their everlasting rest. The Lord grant it never prove thy own case! I would be very loth to weaken the true faith of the meanest Christian, or to persuade any man that his faith is false, when it is true; God forbid that

I should so disparage that precious grace which hath the stamp of the Spirit; or so trouble the soul, that Christ would have to be comforted! But I must needs in faithfulness tell thee, that the confident belief of their good estate, and of the pardon of their sins, which the careless, unholy, unhumiliated multitude among us do so commonly boast of, will prove, in the end, but a soul-damning delusion. It hath made me ready to tremble many a time, to hear a drunken, ungodly, unfaithful minister, as confidently in his formal prayers in the pulpit, give God thanks for vocation, justification, sanctification, and assured hope of glorification, as if he had been a most assured saint; when, it may be, his sermon was intended to reproach the saint, and to jeer at sanctification! Methought I even heard the Pharisee say, I thank thee that I am not as other men; (Luke xviii. 11;) or Corah, Are not all the people holy, every one? (Num. xvi. 3, 5.) How commonly do men thank God for these, which they never received, nor ever shall do! How many have thanked God for pardon of sin, who are now tormented for it; and for sanctification, and assured hope of glory, who are now shut out of that inheritance of the sanctified! I warrant you, there is none of this believing in hell; nor any persuasions of pardon or happiness, nor any boasting of their honesty, nor justifying of themselves. This was but Satan's stratagem, that being blindfold they might follow him the more boldly; but then he will uncover their eyes, and they shall see where they are.

Sect. III. Secondly: Another addition to the misery of the damned will be this: that with the loss of heaven, they shall lose also all their hopes. In this life, though they were threatened with the wrath of God, yet their hope of escaping it did bear up their hearts. And when they were wounded with the terrors of the word, they licked all whole again with their groundless hopes; but then they shall part with their hopes and heaven together. We can now scarcely speak with the vilest drunkard, or swearer, or covetous worldling, or scorner at godliness, but he hopes to be saved for all this. If you should go to all the congregation, or town, or country, and ask them one by one, whether they

¹ It doth us no good to know what is to come, but to fear it; that we may be always as set on our watch, that so the righteous grow not remiss or negligent, or the sinner secure; that so not knowing, we should always fear; and observing and looking for the time, we should amend.—*Ambros. de Fid. lib. v. c. 8.*

hope to be saved, how few shall you meet with that will not say yea, or that make any great question of it! But, oh! happy world, if salvation were as common as this hope; even those whose hellish nature is written in the face of their conversation, that he that runs may read it, whose tongues plead the cause of the devil, and speak the language of hell, and whose delight is in nothing but the works of the flesh; yet, these do strongly hope for heaven, though the God of heaven hath told them over and over again in his word, that no such as they shall ever come there. Though most of the world shall eternally perish; and the Judge of the world himself hath told us, that of the many that are called, yet but few are chosen, yet almost all do hope for it, and cannot endure any man that doth but question their hopes. Let but their minister preach against their false hopes, or their best friend come to them and say, 'I am afraid your present hopes of heaven will deceive you; I see you mind not your soul, your heart is not set upon Christ and heaven, you do not so much as pray to God, and worship him in your family; and the Scripture gives you not the least hope of being saved in such a condition as this is;' how ill would they take such an admonition as this, and bid the admonisher look to himself, and let them alone, he should not answer for them; they hope to be saved, as soon as these preciser men, that pray and talk of heaven so much; nay, so strong are these men's hopes, that they will dispute the cause with Christ himself at judgment, and plead their eating and drinking in his presence, their preaching in his name, and casting out devils, (and these are more probable arguments than our baptism, and common profession, and name of Christians); they will stiffly deny that ever they neglected Christ in hunger, nakedness, prison, &c. (and if they did, yet that is less than stripping, imprisoning, banishing, or killing Christ in his members,) till Christ confute them with the sentence of their condemnation! Though the heart of their hopes will be broken at their death, and particular judgment, yet it seems they would fain plead for such hope at the general judgment. But, oh! the sad state of these men, when they must bid farewell to all their hopes; when their hopes shall all perish with them! Reader, if thou wilt not believe this, it is because thou wilt not believe the Scriptures. The Holy Ghost hath spoken it as plain as can be spoken, "When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish, and the hope of unjust men perisheth." (Prov. xi, 17.) "The hope of the

righteous shall be gladness, but the expectation of the wicked shall perish." (Prov. x. 28.) "For what is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul? Will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him?" (Isa. xxviii. 15, 18; Job xxvii. 8, 9.) "Can the rush grow up without mire? Can the flag grow without water? Whilst it is yet in its greenness, not cut down, it withereth before any other herb; so are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish, whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spider's web; he shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand; he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure." (Job viii. 12—14.) "But the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost."^k (Job xi. 20.) The giving up of the ghost is a fit but terrible resemblance of a wicked man's giving up of his hopes. For, First, As the soul departeth not from the body without the greatest terror and pain, so also doth the hope of the wicked depart. Oh, the direful gripes and pangs of horror that seize upon the soul of the sinner at death and judgment, when he is parting with all his former hopes! Secondly, The soul departeth from the body suddenly, in a moment, which hath there delightfully continued so many years, just so doth the hope of the wicked depart. Thirdly, The soul which then departeth, will never return to live with the body in this world any more; and the hope of the wicked when it departeth, taketh an everlasting farewell of his soul. A miracle of resurrection shall again conjoin the soul and body, but there shall be no such miraculous resurrection of the damned's hope. Methinks it is the most doleful spectacle that this world affords,

^k One of the commonest causes of men's self-deceit is, because they say they daily repent as they daily sin, and therefore hope they have daily pardon; indeed, in ordinary unavoidable infirmities, such as some call venial, and as Paul laments, (I think) Rom. vii., this may hold good. But when men will daily or frequently swear, whore, be drunk, deceive, revenge, lie, backbite, &c., and then comfort themselves in that they repent of it, and so spend their lives in gross sinning and repenting, it will prove an unprofitable repentance; as Clem. Alexand. saith, Continued repenting for gross sins, which run on in course, repenting and sinning again, do nothing differ from them that believe not at all, save only in this, that they perceive themselves to sin; and I know not which is the worse, to sin wittingly and willingly, or thus to sin again after repenting, &c. It seemeth therefore to be repentance, but indeed is not, for a man frequently to beg pardon, when he frequently sinneth, viz., grossly, or, as some call it, mortally (for that is his meaning).—*Clem. Alex. Stromat.* lib. ii. Quod adjungit de secunda tantum, et non tertia pœnitentia admissa, improbandum est.

to see an ungodly person dying, and to think of his soul and hopes departing together ; and with what a sad change he presently appears in another world. Then, if a man could but speak with that hopeless soul, and ask it ; ‘What, are you now as confident of salvation as you were wont to be ; do you now hope to be saved as soon as the most godly ?’ Oh, what a sad answer would he return ! They are just like Korah, Dathan, and their companions : while they are confident in their rebellion against the Lord, and cry out, “Are not all the people holy ?” They are suddenly swallowed up, and their hopes with them : or like Ahab, who hating and imprisoning the prophet for foretelling his danger, while he is in confident hopes to return in peace, is suddenly smitten with that mortal arrow, which let out those hopes, together with his soul ; or, like a thief upon the gallows, who hath a strong conceit that he shall receive a pardon, and so hopes and hopes, till the ladder is turned ; or, like the unbelieving sinners of the world before the flood, who would not believe the threatening of Noah, but perhaps derided him for preparing his ark so many years together, when no danger appeared, till suddenly the flood came and swept them all away. If a man had asked these men, when they were climbing up into the tops of trees and mountains ; ‘Where is now your hope of escaping, or your merry deriding at the painful preventing preparations of godly Noah ; or your contemptuous unbelief of the warnings of God ?’ what do you think these men would then say, when the waters still pursued them from place to place, till it devoured their hopes and them together ? Or if one had asked Ahab, when he had received his wound, and turned out of the battle to die ; ‘What think you now of the prophecy of Micaiah ; will you release him out of prison ; do you now hope to return in peace ?’ Why, such a sudden overthrow of their hopes will every unregenerate sinner receive. While they were upon earth, they frustrated the expectations, as I may say, of God and man ; God sent his messengers to tell them plainly of their danger, and said, It may be they will hear and return and escape ; but they stiffened their necks and hardened their hearts : the minister studied, and instructed, and persuaded them in hope : and when one sermon prevailed not, he laboured to speak more plainly and piercingly in the next, in hope that at last they would be persuaded and return ; till their hopes were frustrate, and their labour lost, and they were fain to turn their exhortation to lamentation, and to sit down

in sorrow for men's wilful misery; and take up the sad exclamation of the prophet, "Who hath believed our report; and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?"¹ (Isa. liii. 1 :) so did godly parents also instruct their children in hope, and watch over them, and pray for them, hoping that at last their hearts would turn to Christ; and is it not meet that God should frustrate all their hopes, who have frustrated the hopes of all that desired their welfare? Oh! that careless sinners would be awaked to think of this in time! If thou be one of them, who art reading these lines, I do here as a friend advise thee, from the word of the Lord, that, as thou wouldst not have all thy hopes deceive thee, when thou hast most need of them, thou presently try them, whether they will prove current at the touchstone of the Scripture; and if thou find them unsound, let them go, whatsoever sorrow they cost thee. Rest not till thou canst give a reason of all thy hopes; (1 Pet. iii. 15;) till thou canst prove that they are the hopes which grace and not nature only hath wrought; that they are grounded upon scripture promises and sound evidences; that they purify thy heart; that they quicken, and not cool thy endeavours in godliness; that the more thou hopest, the less thou sinnest,^m and the more painful thou art in following on the work, and not grown more loose and careless by the increasing of thy hopes; and they make thee set lighter by all things on earth, because thou hast such hopes of higher possessions; that thou art willing to have them tried, and fearful of being deceived; that they stir up thy desires of enjoying what thou hopest for, and the deferring thereof is the trouble of thy heart. (Prov. xiii. 12.) If thou be sure that thy hopes be such as these, God forbid that I should speak a word against them, or discourage thee from proceeding to hope thus to the end. No, I rather persuade thee to go on in the strength of the Lord; and whatever men or

¹ When our ministry petrifies, turns hearts into stones, and these taken up and thrown at us, this kills us: the recoiling of our pains kills us: when our peace returns to us; when we spend our strength to make men more naught than they were; this wounds our heart: which should be considered of sinners; to kill oneself, and one's minister too, that would save him. What a bloody condition is this! The blood of a minister on a man's soul, is more than the blood of many men: stubborn souls, lay this to heart.—*Lockier on Col. i. 29.* p. 52.

^m There is a twofold repentance: the one, for that a man hath sinned, which is common; the other, when a man hath learned the nature of sin, persuadeth him by principal reason to desist from sin; the consequent of which is, to sin no more.—*Clem. Alexan. Stromat.* lib. vi.

devils, or thy own unbelieving heart,ⁿ shall say against it, go on, and hold fast thy hope, and be sure it will never make thee ashamed. But if thy hope be not of this spiritual nature, and if thou art able to give no better reason why thou hopest, than the worst in the world may give, that God is merciful; and thou must speed as well as thou canst, or the like; and hast not one sound evidence of a saving work of grace upon thy soul, to show for thy hopes; but only hopest that thou shalt be saved, because thou wouldst have it so, and because it is a terrible thing to despair: if this be thy case, delay not an hour; but presently cast away those hopes, that thou mayst get into a capacity of having better in their stead. But it may be thou wilt think this strange doctrine, and say, 'What, would you persuade me directly to despair?' Answ. Sinner, I would be loth to have thy soul destroyed by wilful self-delusion. The truth is, there is a hope, such as I have before showed thee, which is a singular grace and duty: and there is a hope which is a notorious, dangerous sin. So, consequently, there is a despair which is a grievous sin; and there is a despair which is absolutely necessary to thy salvation. I would not have thee despair of the sufficiency of the blood of Christ to save thee, if thou believe, and heartily obey him; nor of the willingness of God to pardon and save thee, if thou be such an one; nor yet absolutely of thy own salvation; because, while there is life and time, there is some hope of thy conversion, and so of thy salvation; nor would I draw thee to despair of finding Christ, if thou do but heartily seek him: or of God's acceptance of any sincere endeavours, nor of thy success against Satan, or any corruption which thou shalt heartily oppose, nor of any thing whatsoever God hath promised to do, either to all men in general, or to such as thou art. I would not have thee doubt of any of these in the least measure, much less despair. But this is the despair that I would persuade thee to, as thou lovest thy soul: that thou despair of ever being saved, except thou be born again; or of seeing God, without holiness; or of escaping perishing, except thou soundly repent: or of ever having part in Christ, or salvation by him, or ever being one of his true disciples, ex-

ⁿ Give me a man that, after many secret bickerings and hard conflicts in his breast, upon a serious penitence, and sense of reconciliation with his God, hath attained to a quiet heart; walking conscionably and close with that Majesty with whom he is atoned. I shall bless and emulate him as a meet subject of true joy.—*Bishop Hall Soliloq.* 11. pp. 37, 38.

cept thou love him above father, mother, or thy own life : or of ever having a treasure in heaven, except thy very heart be there : or of ever escaping eternal death, if thou walk after the flesh, and dost not by the Spirit mortify the deeds of the flesh ; or of ever truly loving God, or being his servant, while thou lovest the world, and servest it.^o These things I would have thee despair of, and whatever else God hath told thee shall never come to pass. And when thou hast sadly searched into thy own heart, and findest thyself in any of these cases, I would have thee despair of thyself of ever being saved in that state thou art in. Never stick at the sadness of the conclusion, man, but acknowledge plainly, If I die before I get out of this estate, I am lost for ever. It is as good deal truly with thyself as not ; God will not flatter thee, he will deal plainly whether thou do or not. The very truth is, this kind of despair is one of the first steps to heaven. Consider, if a man be quite out of his way, what must be the first means to bring him in again ? Why, a despair of ever coming to his journey's end in the way that he is in. If his home be eastward, and he be going westward, as long as he hopes he is in the right, he will go on ; and as long as he so goes on hoping, he goes further amiss : therefore, when he meets with somebody that assures him that he is clean out of his way, and brings him to despair of coming home, except he turn back again ; then he will return, and then he may hope and spare not. Why, sinner, just so is it with thy soul : thou art born out of the way to heaven ; and in that way thou hast proceeded many a year ; yet thou goest on quietly, and hopest to be saved, because thou art not so bad as many others. Why, I tell thee, except thou be brought to throw away those hopes, and see that thou hast all this while been quite out of the way to heaven ; and hast been a child of wrath, and a servant of Satan, unpardoned, unsanctified, and if thou hadst died in this state, hadst been certainly damned : I say, till thou be brought to this, thou wilt never return and be saved. Who will turn out of his way while he hopes he is right ? And let me once again tell thee, that if ever God mean good to thy soul, and intend to save thee, this is one of the first things that he will work upon thee : remember what I say, till thou feel God convincing thee, that the way which thou hast lived in, will not serve the turn, and so break down thy former hopes, there is yet no saving-

^o John iii. 5 ; Heb. xii. 14 ; Luke xiv. 25—27, &c., xv. 3, 4, xvi. 23 ; Matt. vi. 11 ; Rom. viii. 13 ; 1 John ii. 15.

work wrought upon thee, how well soever thou mayst hope of thyself. Yea, thus much more, if any thing keep thy soul out of heaven, which God forbid, there is nothing in the world liker to do it, than thy false hopes of being saved, while thou art out of the way to salvation. Why else is it that God cries down such hopes in his word? Why is it that every faithful, skilful minister doth bend all his strength against the false faith and hope of sinners, as if he were to fight against neither small nor great, but this prince of iniquity? Why, alas! they know that these are the main pillars of Satan's kingdom; bring down but them too, and the house will fall. They know also the deceit and vanity of such hopes; that they are directly contrary to the truth of God; and what a sad case that soul is in, who hath no other hope, but that God's word will prove false; when the truth of God is the only ground of true hope; alas! it is no pleasure to a minister to speak to people upon such an unwelcome subject, any more than it is to a pitiful physician to tell his patient, I do despair of your life, except you let blood; or there is no hope of the cure, except the gangrened member be cut off: if it be true, and of flat necessity, though it be displeasing, there is no remedy. Why, I beseech you, think on it reasonably without prejudice or passion, and tell me, where doth God give any hope of your salvation, till you are new creatures? (Gal. vi. 15.) Nay, I have showed you where he flatly overthroweth all such hope. (Gal. v. 18—24; 2 Cor. v. 7.) And will it do you any good for a minister to give you hope, where God gives you none; or, would you desire him to do so? Why, what would you think of such a minister, when those hopes forsake you; or what thanks will you give him, when you find yourself in hell? would you not there lie and curse him for a deceiver for ever? I know this to be true, and therefore I had rather you were displeased with me here, than curse me there. For my own part, if I had but one sermon to preach while I lived, I think this should be it: to persuade down all your ungrounded hopes of heaven, not to leave you there in despair, but that you may hope upon better grounds which will never deceive you. God hath told us what he shall say: "Say to the righteous, It shall be well with him; and to the wicked, It shall be ill with him." (Isa. iii. 10, 11.) And if I shall say, it will be well with thee, when God hath said, it shall be ill with thee, what the better wert thou for this? Whose word would stand, think you, God's or mine? Oh, little do carnal ministers know what

they do, who strengthen the hopes of ungodly men ! They work as hard as they can against God, while they stand there to speak in the name of God, who layeth his battery against these false hopes, as knowing that they must now down, or the sinner must perish : and these teachers build up what God is pulling down. I know not what they can do worse to destroy men's souls : they are false teachers in regard of application, though they are true in regard of doctrine : this is partly through their flattering, men-pleasing temper ; partly because they are guilty themselves, and so should destroy their own hopes, as well as others ; and partly because being graceless, they want that experience which should help them to discern betwixt hope and hope. The same may be said of carnal friends : if they see a poor sinner but doubting whether all be well with him, and but troubled for fear lest he be out of the way ; what pains do they take to keep up his old hopes ? 'What,' say they, 'if you should not be saved, God help a great many : you have lived honestly, &c. : never doubt, man, God is merciful !' Alas, silly creatures, you think you perform an office of friendship, and do him much good ! even as much as to give cold water to a man in a fever ; you may ease him at the present, but it afterwards inflames him. What thanks will he give you hereafter, if you settle him upon his former hopes again ? Did you never read, "He that saith to the wicked, 'Thou art righteous, him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him ?'" (Prov. xxiv. 24.) If you were faithful friends indeed, you should rather say thus to him ; Friend, if you perceive the soundness of your hopes for heaven to be doubtful, oh ! do not smother those doubts, but go and open them to your minister, or some able friend ; and try them thoroughly in time, and hold no more of them now, than will hold good at judgment : it is better they break while they may be built more surely, than when the discovery will be your torment, but not your remedy. This were friendly and faithful counsel indeed. The proverb is, "If it were not for hope, the heart would break : " and Scripture tells us, that the heart must break that Christ will save. How can it be bound up till it be broken first ? so that the hope which keeps their hearts from breaking, doth keep them also from healing and saving.

Well, if these unwise men (who are, as we say, penny wise, and pound foolish, who are wise to keep off the smart of a short, conditional, necessary, curable despair, but not wise to prevent an eternal, absolute, tormenting, incurable despair) do not

change their condition speedily, those hopes will leave them which they would not leave ; and then they that were fully resolved to hold fast their hopes, let all the preachers in the world say what they would, shall let them go whether they will or no. Then let them hope for heaven if they can.

So that, you see, it will aggravate the misery of the damned, that with the loss of heaven, they shall lose all that hope of it which now supporteth them.

Sect. IV. Thirdly : Another additional loss will be this, They will lose all the false peace of conscience which maketh their present life so easy. The loss of this must necessarily follow the loss of the former. When presumption and hope are gone, peace cannot tarry. Who would think, now, that sees how quietly the multitude of the ungodly live, that they must very shortly lie roaring in everlasting flames ? They lie down, and rise, and sleep as quietly ; they eat and drink as quietly ; they go about their work as cheerfully ; they talk as pleasantly as if nothing ailed them, or as if they were as far out of danger as an obedient believer ; like a man that hath the falling sickness, you would little think, while he is labouring as strong, and talking as heartily as another man, how he will presently fall down, lie gasping and foaming, and beating his breast in torment : so it is with these men. They are as free from the fears of hell as others, as free from any vexing sorrows, not so much as troubled with any cares of the state of their souls, nor with any sad or serious thoughts of what shall become of them in another world ; yea, and for the most part, they have less doubts and disquiet of mind, than those who shall be saved. Oh, happy men, if it would be always thus ; and if this peace would prove a lasting peace ! But, alas ! there's the misery, it will not. They are now in their own element, as the fish in the water ; but little knows that silly creature when he is most fearlessly and delightfully swallowing down the bait, how suddenly he shall be snatched out, and lie dead upon the bank ! And as little think these careless sinners, what a change they are near. The sheep or the ox is driven quietly to the slaughter, because he knows not whither he goes ; if he knew it were to his death, you could not drive him so easily. How contented is the swine, when the butcher's knife is shaving his throat, little thinking that it is to prepare for his death ! Why, it is even so with these sensual careless men. They fear the mischief least, when they are nearest to it, because they fear it not, or see it not with their eyes.

“As in the days of Noah (saith Christ) they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, till the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not till the flood came, and took them all away ;” (Matt. xxiv. 37—39 ;) so will the coming of Christ be, and so will the coming of their particular judgment be. “For (saith the apostle) when they say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape.” (1 Thess. v. 3.) Oh, cruel peace, which ends in such a war ! Reader, if this be thy own case ; if thou hast no other peace in thy conscience than this ungrounded, self-created peace, I could heartily wish, for thy own sake, that thou wouldest cast it off. As I would not have any humble, gracious souls to vex their own consciences needlessly, nor to disquiet and discompose their spirits by troubles of their own making, nor to unfit themselves for duty, nor to interrupt their comfortable communion with God, nor to weaken their bodies, or cast themselves into melancholy distempers to the scandal of religion ; so would I not have a miserable wretch, who lives in a daily and hourly danger of dropping into hell, to be as merry and as quiet as if all were well with him : it is both unseemly and unsafe ; more unseemly than to see a man go laughing to the gallows ; and more unsafe than to favour the gangrened member, which must be cut off, or to be making merry when the enemy is entering our habitations. Men’s first peace is usually a false peace ; it is a second peace, which is brought into the soul upon the casting out of the first, which will stand good, and yet not always that neither ; for, where the change is by the halves, the second or third peace may be unsound, as well as the first ; as many a man that casteth away the peace of his profaneness, doth take up the peace of mere civility and morality ; or if he yet discover the unsoundness of that, and is cast into trouble, then he healeth all with outward righteousness, or with a half Christianity, and there he taketh up with peace. This is but driving Satan out of one room into another ; but till he be cast out of possession, the peace is unsound. Hear what Christ saith : “When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace ; but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.” (Luke xi. 21, 22.) The soul of every man, by nature, is Satan’s garrison ; all is at peace in such a man, till Christ comes ; when Christ storms this heart, he breaks the

peace; he giveth it most terrible alarms of judgment and hell, he battereth it with the ordnance of his threatenings and terrors; he sets all in a combustion of fear and sorrow, till he have forced it to yield to his mere mercy, and take him for the governor, and Satan is cast out; and then doth he establish a firm and lasting peace. If, therefore, thou art yet but in that first peace, and thy heart was never yet either taken by storm, or delivered up freely to Jesus Christ, never think that thy peace will endure. Can the soul have peace which is at enmity with Christ, or stands out against him, or thinks his government too severe, and his conditions hard; can he have peace against whom God proclaimeth war. I may say to thee, as Jehu to Joram, when he asked, "Is it peace? What peace, while the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel remain?" So thou art desirous to hear nothing from the mouth of a minister but peace; but what peace can there be, till thou hast cast away thy wickedness and thy first peace, and make thy peace with God through Christ: wilt thou believe God himself in this case? why, read then what he saith twice over, "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." (Isa. xlviii. 22, and lvii. 22.) And hath he said it; and shall it not stand? Sinner, though thou mayst now harden and fortify thy heart against fear, and grief, and trouble, yet as true as God is true, they will batter down thy proud and fortified spirit, and seize upon it, and drive thee to amazement: this will be done either here or hereafter. My counsel therefore to thee is, that thou presently examine the grounds of thy peace, and say, 'I am now at ease and quiet in my mind; but is it grounded, and will it be lasting; is the danger of eternal judgment over; am I sure my sins are pardoned, and my soul shall be saved? if not, alas! what cause of peace? I may be in hell before the next day, for aught I know.' Certainly, a man that stands upon the pinnacle of a steeple, or that sleeps on the top of the main-mast, or that is in the heat of the most bloody fight, hath more cause of peace and carelessness than thou. Why, thou livest under the wrath of God continually, thou art already sentenced to eternal death, and mayst every hour expect the execution, till thou have sued out a pardon through Christ. I can show thee a hundred threatenings in Scripture which are yet in force against thee; but canst thou show me one promise for thy safety an hour? What assurance hast thou when thou goest forth of thy doors that thou shalt ever come in again? I should wonder, but that I know the des-

perate hardness of the heart of man, how a man that is not sure of his peace with God, could eat, or drink, or sleep, or live in peace! That thou art not afraid when thou liest down, lest thou shouldst awake in hell; or, when thou risest up, lest thou shouldst be in hell before night; or, when thou sittest in thy house, that thou still fearest not the approach of death, or some fearful judgment seizing upon thee, and that the threats and sentence are not always sounding in thy ears. Well, if thou wert the nearest friend that I have in the world, in this case that thou art in, I could wish thee no greater good, than that God would break in upon thy careless heart, and shake thee out of thy false peace, and cast thee into trouble, that when thou feelest thy heart at ease, thou wouldst remember thy misery; that when thou art pleasing thyself with thy estate, or business, or labours, thou wouldst still remember the approaching woe; that thou wouldst cry out in the midst of thy pleasant discourse and merry company, ‘Oh, how near is the great and dreadful change!’ that whatever thou art doing, God would make thee read thy sentence, as if it were still written before thine eyes; and which way soever thou goest, he would still meet thee full in the face with the sense of his wrath, as the angel did Balaam with a drawn sword, till he had made thee cast away thy groundless peace, and lie down at the feet of Christ, whom thou hast resisted, and say, ‘Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?’ and so receive from him a surer and better peace, which will never be quite broken, but will be the beginning of thy everlasting peace, and not perish in thy perishing, as the groundless peace of the world will do.

Sect. V. Fourthly: Another additional loss, aggravating their loss of heaven, is this, They shall lose all their carnal mirth.^P Their merry vein will then be opened and empty; they will say themselves, as Solomon doth, of their laughter, “Thou art mad,” and of their mirth, “What didst thou?” (Eccles. ii. 2.) Their witty jests and pleasant conceits are then ended, and their merry tales are all told. “Their mirth was but as the crackling of thorns under a pot;” (Eccles. vii. 6;) it made a great blaze

^P The sorrow of the godly is with hope and joy, but the sorrow of the wicked is without hope. Jest not with hell: it is a horrible thing to fall into the hands of a consuming fire.—*Rollock on John*, lect. vi. p. 152. I know mirth is lawful, but as Seneca saith to the Epicure, “Tu voluptatem complecteris: ego compesco. Tu voluptate fruieris: ego utor. Tu illum summum bonum putas: ego nec bonum. Tu omnia voluptatis causa facis; ego nihil.”—*Senec. de Vit. Beat.* c. 10. Vide Platerum. ‘*Observ.*’ lib. i. p. 92.

and unseemly noise for a little while, but it was presently gone, and will return no more. They scorned to entertain any saddening thoughts : the talk of death and judgment was irksome to them, because it damped their mirth : they could not endure to think of their sin or danger, because these thoughts did sad their spirits. They knew not what it was to weep for sin, or to humble themselves under the mighty hand of God. They could laugh away sorrow, and sing away cares, and drive away these melancholy thoughts. They thought, if they should live so austere, and meditate, and pray, and mourn, as the godly do, their lives would be a continual misery, and it were enough to make them run mad. Alas, poor souls ! what a misery then will that life be, where you shall have nothing but sorrow ; intense, heart-piercing, multiplied sorrow ; when you shall have neither the joys of the saints, nor your own former joys ! Do you think there is one merry heart in hell ; or one joyful countenance, or jesting tongue ? You cry now, A little mirth is worth a great deal of sorrow ; but surely a little godly sorrow, which would have ended in eternal joy, had been more worth than a great deal of your foolish mirth, which will end in sorrow. Can men of gravity run laughing and playing in the streets as little children do ; or wise men laugh at a mischief as fools and madmen ; or men, that are sound in their brain, fall a dancing, as they will do in a *viti saltus*, till they fall down dead with it ? No more pleasure have wise men in your pitiful mirth : for the end of such mirth is sorrow.

Sect. VI. Fifthly : Another additional loss will be this, They shall lose all their sensual contentments and delights.¹ That which they esteemed their chiefest good, their heaven, their God, that must they lose, as well as heaven and God himself. They shall then, in despite of them, fulfil that command, which

¹ The dead skull of a king retains not so much as a print of the crown ; the guilty soul may the spots of sin. As the bold bishop told the great emperor, taking hold of his purple robe, ' Sir, you shall not carry this hence with you.' —*Dr. Stoughton Magis. Commis.* p. 32. Tunc edax flamma comburit quos nunc carnalis delectatio polluit ; tunc infinitum patens inferni barathrum devorat, quos inanis elatio nunc exaltat ; et qui olim ex vitio voluntatem caillidi persuasoris expleverunt, tunc cum duce suo reprobo ad tormenta pervenient.—*Greg. Moral.* 9. Quid enim consolatur eos, qui suam habent consolationem ? Non consolatur Christi infantia garrulos ; non consolantur Christi lachrymæ cachinnantes ; non consolantur panni ejus ambulantes in stolis ; non consolantur præsepe et stabulum amantes primas cathedras in synagogis ; sed æquanimiter forte universam hanc consolationem expectantibus in silentio Dominum lugentibus, paunos pauperibus credere videbuntur.—*Bern. Serm.* 22.

here they would not be persuaded to obey, of “making no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.” (Rom. xiii. 14.) Oh, what a fall will the proud, ambitious man have from the top of his honours! As his dust and bones will not be known from the dust and bones of the poorest beggars, so neither will his soul be honoured or favoured any more than theirs. What a number of the great, noble, and learned, are now shut out of the presence of Christ! If you say, ‘How can I tell that?’ why, I answer, because their Judge hath told me so. Hath he not said by his apostle, “that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called?” (1 Cor. i. 26.) And if they be not called, they be not predestinate, or justified, or glorified. (Rom. viii. 30.) Surely that rich man (Luke xvi.) hath now no humble obeisance done him, nor titles of honour put upon him; nor do the poor now wait at his gates to receive of his scraps. They must be shut out of their well-contrived houses, and sumptuous buildings, their comely chambers, with costly hangings; their soft beds, and easy couches. They shall not find their gallant walks, their curious gardens, with a variety of beauteous, odoriferous fruits and flowers; their rich pastures, and pleasant meadows, and plenteous harvest, and flocks and herds. Their tables will not be so spread and furnished, nor they so punctually attended and observed. They have not there variety of dainty fare, nor several courses, nor tempting dishes prepared to please their appetites to the full. The rich man there fareth not deliciously every day, neither shall he wear there his purple and fine linen. The jetting, gorgeous, well-dressed gallant, that must not have a pin amiss, that stands as a picture set to sale, that take themselves more beholden to the tailor or sempster for their comeliness, than to God; they shall then be quite in a different garb. There is no powdering or curling of their hair, nor eyeing of themselves, nor desirous expecting the admiration of beholders. ^r Surely, our voluptuous

^r Defectus à summo bono ad infimum bonum, hoc est, peccatoris proprium et voluntarium malum, quo malo seipsum perdit injustus. Et quia huic malo author non est Deus, sed homo perversus, digne itaque homini qui se perdidit peccato, redditur in tormentis æterna perditio, ut pereat quidem qui perire voluit, non tamen sic pereat quemadmodum voluit. Qui enim sic peribit, delectatione peccatorum illectus, ut si posset fieri, maneret in opere peccati perpetuus; juste quidem est in perditione peccati dimissus quo propria cecidit voluntate—*Fulgent. ad Monim.* lib. i. c. 19. A voluptate occupatus, quomodo resistet labori ac periculo, egestati et tot humanam vitam circumstreptibus minis? Quomodo conspectum mortis? Quomodo dolores feret? Quomodo mundi fragores, et tantum acerrimorum hostium, à tam molli adversario victus. Quicquid voluptas suaserit, faciet, Age, non vides quam multa suasura sit.—*Sen. de Vit. Beat.* c. 11.

youths must leave their cards and dice behind them, as also their hawks, and hounds, and bowls, and all their former pleasant sports : they shall then spend their time in a more sad employment, and not in such pastimes as these. Where will then be your May-games, and your morrice-dancers ; your stage-plays, and your shows : what mirth will you have in remembering all the games, and sports, and dancings, which you had on the Lord's-days, when you should have been delighting yourselves in God and his work ? Oh, what an alteration will our jovial, roaring swaggerers then find : what bitter draughts will they have instead of their wine and ale ! If there were any drinking of healths, the rich man would not have begged so hard for a drop of water : the heat of their lust will be then abated ; they shall not spend their time in courting their mistresses, in lascivious discourse, in amorous songs, in wanton dalliance, in their lustful embracements, or brutish defilements ; yet they are likely enough to have each other's company there : but they will have no more comfort in that company, than Zimri and Cosbi in dying together ; or than lewd companions have, in being hanged together on the same gallows. Oh, the doleful meeting that these lustful wantons will have there ! how it will even cut them to the heart, to look each other in the face, and to remember that beastly pleasure, for which they now must pay so dear ! so will it be with the fellowship of drunkards, and all others that were playfellows together in sin, who got not their pardon in the time of their lives. What direful greeting will there then be, cursing the day that ever they saw the faces of one another ; remembering and ripping up all their lewdness, to the aggravation of their torment ! Oh, that sinners would remember this in the midst of their pleasure and jollity, and say to one another, ' We must shortly reckon for this before the jealous God.' Will the remembrance of it then be comfortable or terrible ; will these delights accompany us to another world : how shall we look each other in the face, if we meet in hell together for these things ; will not the memorial of them be then our torment : shall we then take these for friendly actions, or rather wish we had spent this time in praying together, or admonishing one another ? Oh, why should we sell such a lasting, incomprehensible joy, for one taste of seeming pleasure ! Come, as we have sinned together, let us pray together before we stir, that God would pardon us ; and let us enter into a promise to one another, that we will do thus no more, but will meet together with the godly in the worship of God, and help

one another towards heaven, as often as we have met for our sinful merriments, in helping to deceive and destroy each other.' This would be the way to prevent this sorrow, and a course that would comfort you, when you look back upon it hereafter. Who would spend so many days,^s and years, and thoughts, and cares, and be at so much cost and pains, and all to please this flesh for a moment, which must shortly be most loathsome, stinking rottenness ; and in the meantime neglect our precious souls, and that state which we must trust to for ever and ever ? To be at such pains for that pleasure which dies in the enjoying, and is almost as soon gone as come ; and when we have most need of comfort, will be so far from following us as our happiness, that it will be perpetual fuel to the flames which shall torment us ! Oh, that men knew but what they desire, when they would so fain have all things suited to the desires of the flesh ! They would have buildings, walks, lands, clothes, diet, and all so fitted as may be most pleasing and delightful. Why, this is but to desire their temptations to be increased, and their snare strengthened : their joys will be more carnal ; and how great an enemy carnal joy is to spiritual, experienced men can quickly tell you. If we took the flesh so much for our enemy as we do profess, we could not so earnestly desire and contrive to accommodate it, and so congratulate all its contentments as we do.

CHAP. IV.

The Greatness of the Torments of the Damned Discovered.

SECT. I. Having thus showed you how great their loss is, who are shut out of rest, and how it will be aggravated by those additional losses which will accompany it, I should next here show you the greatness of those positive sufferings which will accompany this loss. But because I am to treat of rest, rather than of torment, I will not meddle with the explication of the quality of those sufferings, but only show their greatness in some few brief discoveries, lest the careless sinner, while he hears of no

^s Quid mihi voluptatem nominas ? Hominis bonum quæro, non ventris, qui pecudibus et belluis laxior est.—*Senec. de Vit. Beat.* c. 9. Most certain it is that virtue hath not a more capital enemy than such a perpetual success as they call most happy, which, to join together with honesty, is no less difficulty than to combine things by nature most contrary.—*Bodin. Commonwealth*, lib. i. p. 1.

other punishment but that of loss before mentioned, should think he can bear that well enough by his own resolvedness, and so flatter himself in hope of a tolerable hell. That there are, besides the loss of happiness, such actual, sensible torments for the damned, is a matter beyond all doubt to him that doth not doubt the truth of the Scriptures; and that they will be exceeding great, may appear by these arguments following.

First: From the principal Author of them, which is God himself:^t as it was no less than God whom the sinner had offended, so it is no less than God that will punish them for their offences. He hath prepared those torments for his enemies. His continued anger will still be devouring them. His breath of indignation will kindle the flames. His wrath will be an intolerable burden to their souls. Oh, if it were but a creature that they had to do with, they might bear it, for the penalty would be answerable to the infirmity of him that should inflict it. A child can give but an easy stroke, but the strokes of a giant will be answerable to his strength. Wo to him that falls under the stroke of the Almighty! They shall feel to their sorrow, that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. It were nothing in comparison to this, if all the world were against them, or if the strength of all creatures were united in one to inflict their penalty. They had now rather venture upon the displeasure of God, than to displease a landlord, a master, a friend, a neighbour, or their own flesh: but then they will wish a thousand times in vain, that they had lost the favour of all the world, and had been hated of all men, so they had not lost the favour of God; for, as there is no life like his favour, so is there no death like his displeasure. Oh, what a consuming fire is his wrath! If it be kindled here, and that but a little, how do we wither before it, as the grass that is cut down before the sun! How soon doth our strength decay, and

^t Yet I know what Gibieuf saith, and many schoolmen, that God is not *causa mali*, (*etiam pœnæ*), *quâ malum*. And Irenæus speaks as if he thought it were a natural consequent of their own wilfulness, and not properly effected by God. And, indeed, if it be true that "*malum sensus*" as well as "*malum damni est formaliter privatio boni*, &c. *tunc causam efficientem per se non habet Deum*; qui ergo per apostasiam amiserunt quæ prædicta sunt, quippe desolati ab omnibus bonis, in omni pœna conversantur; Deo quidem principaliter non à seipso eos puniente; prosequente autem eos pœna, quoniam sunt desolati ab omni bono. Ut in immenso lumine, qui excæcaverunt seipsos, vel ab aliis excæcati sunt, semper privati sunt jucunditate luminis. Non quod lumen pœnam eis inferat cæcitatibus; sed quod ipsa cæcitas superinducat eis calamitatem.—*Iren. adv. Hæres. lib. v. c. 27.*

turn to weakness, and our beauty to deformity ! Churches are rooted up, commonwealths are overthrown, kingdoms depopulated, armies destroyed, and who can stand before his wrath ? Even the heavens and earth will melt at his presence ; and when he speaks the word at his great day of account, they will be burnt up before him as a scroll in the fire. The flames do not so easily run through the dry stubble, or consume the houses where its violence hath prevailed, as the wrath of God will feed upon these wretches. Oh, they that could not bear a prison, or a gibbet, or fire, for Christ, no, nor scarcely a few scorns from the mouths of the ignorant, how will they now bear the devouring fire !

Sect. II. 2. The place or state of torment, is purposely ordained for the glorifying of the attribute of God's justice. As all the works of God are great and wonderful, so those above all, which are specially intended for the eminent advancing of some of his attributes. When he will glorify his power, he makes the worlds by his wisdom. The comely order of all and singular creatures, declares his wisdom. His providence is shown, in sustaining all things, and maintaining order,^a and attaining his excellent ends, amongst the confused, perverse, tumultuous agitations of a world of wicked, foolish, self-destroying miscreants. When a spark of his wrath doth kindle upon the earth, the whole world, save only eight persons, are drowned. Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, are burned with fire from heaven, to ashes. The sea shuts her mouth upon some. The earth doth open and swallow others. The pestilence destroyeth them up by thousands. The present deplorable state of the Jews, may fully testify this to the world. And yet the glorifying of the two great attributes of mercy and justice, is intended most eminently for the life to come. As, therefore, when God will purposely then glorify his mercy, he will do it in a way and degree that is now incredible, and beyond the comprehension of the saints that must enjoy it ; so that the blood of his Son, and the enjoyment of himself immediately in glory, shall not be thought too high an honour for them. So also, when the time comes that he will purposely manifest his justice, it shall appear to be indeed the justice of God. The

^a Deus permittit mala ut inde eliciat bona, ut probat Gibieuf. lib. ii. c. 22. sect. 6—10. Et si malum in terris abundet ; si tamen disponentem desuper providentiam spectes, nihil usquam mali deprehendes.—*Boetius Referent. Gibieuf.*

everlasting flames of hell will not be thought too hot for the rebellious; and when they have there burnt through millions of ages, he will not repent him of the evil which is befallen them. Oh! wo to the soul that is thus set up for a butt, for the wrath of the Almighty to shoot at; and for a bush, that must burn in the flames of his jealousy, and never be consumed!

Sect. III. 3. The torments of the damned must needs be extreme, because they are the effect of divine revenge.^x Wrath is terrible, but revenge is implacable. When the great God shall say, 'I will now be righted for all the wrongs that I have borne from rebellious creatures; I will let out my wrath, and it shall be stayed no more, you shall now pay for all the abuse of my patience! Remember, now, how I waited your leisure in vain, how I stooped to persuade you; how I, as it were, kneeled to entreat you. Did you think I would always be slighted by such miscreants as you?' Oh, who can look up when God shall thus plead with them in the heat of revenge! Then will he be revenged for every mercy abused, for his creatures consumed in luxury and excess, for every hour's time misspent, for the neglect of his word, for the vilifying of his messengers, for the hating of his people, for the profanation of his ordinances, and neglect of his worship, for the breaking of his Sabbaths, and the grieving of his Spirit, for the taking of his name in vain, for unmerciful neglect of his servants in distress. Oh! the numberless bill that will be brought in! And the charge that will overcharge the soul of the sinner! And how hotly revenge will pursue them all to the highest! How God will stand over them with the rod in his hand, (not the rod of fatherly chastisement, but that iron rod wherewith he bruise the rebellious,) and lay it on for all their neglects of Christ and grace. Oh, that men would foresee this, and not put themselves under the hammer of revenging fury, when they may have the treasure of happiness at so easy rates, and please God better in preventing their wo!

Sect. IV. 4. Consider, also, how this justice and revenge will be the delight of the Almighty. Though he had rather men would stoop to Christ, and accept of his mercy, yet when they persist in rebellion, he will take pleasure in their execution.^y Though

^x Cremabit addictos ardens semper gehenna; et vivacibus flammis vorax pœna. Nec erit unde habere tormenta vel requiem possint aliquando vel finem. Servabuntur cum corporibus suis animæ infinitis cruciatibus ad dolorem. Vermis eorum non moritur, et ignis eorum non exstinguitur, &c.—*Cyprian, ad Demetr.* p. 530. *Psal.* ii. 9.

^y Unus igitur, et idem Deus Pater qui concupiscentibus ejus communica-

he desire not the death of him that dieth, but rather that he repent and live ; yet, when he will not repent and live, God doth desire and delight in the execution of justice conditionally ; so that men will repent, he desires not their death, but their life. (Ezek. xxxiii. 11.) Yet, if they repent not, in the same place he uttereth his resolution for their death. (Ver. 8, 13.) He tells us, “ that fury is not in him ; ” yet he addeth in the next words, “ Who would set the briars and thorns together in battle ? I would go through them ; I would burn them together.” (Isai. xxvii. 4.) What a doleful case is the wretched creature in, when he shall thus set the heart of his Creator against him ! “ And he that made him, will not save him ; and he that formed him, will not have mercy upon him.” (Isai. xxvii. 11.) How heavy a threatening is that, “ As the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good, so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought.” (Deut. xxviii. 63.) Wo to the soul which God rejoiceth to punish. Yea, he tells the simple ones that love simplicity, and the scorers that delight in scorning, and the fools that hate knowledge, “ that because he called, and they refused, he stretched out his hand, and no man regarded, but set at nought all his counsel, and would none of his reproof ; therefore he will also laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear cometh : when their fear cometh as desolation, and their destruction as a whirlwind ; when distress and anguish cometh upon them, then shall they call upon him, but he will not answer ; they shall seek him early, but shall not find him ; for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord.” (Prov. i. 22—29.) I could entreat thee, who readest them, if thou be one of that sort of men, that thou wilt but view over seriously that part of the chapter (Prov. i.) from the 20th verse to the end, and believe them to be the true words of Christ by his Spirit in Solomon. Is it not a terrible thing to a wretched soul, when it shall lie roaring perpetually in the flames of hell, and the God of mercy himself shall laugh at them ; when they shall cry out for mercy, yea, for one drop of water, and God shall mock them instead of relieving them ; when none in heaven or earth can help them but God, and he shall rejoice over them in their calamity ? Why, you

tionem, et perseverantibus in subjectione ejus quæ sunt apud se preparata bona : principi autem abscessionis, diabolo, et qui cum eo abscescerunt angelis, æternum ignem præparans : in quem mittuntur, inquit Dominus, illi qui in sinistra separati sunt.—*Iren. adv. Hæres. lib. iv. c. 76.*

see these are the very words of God himself in Scripture. And most just is it, that they who laughed at the sermon, and mocked at the preacher, and derided the people that obeyed the Gospel, should be laughed at, and derided by God. Ah! poor ignorant fools (for so this text calls them), they will then have mocking enough, till their hearts ache with it.^z I dare warrant them for ever making a jest at godliness more, or making themselves merry with their own slanderous reports. It is themselves, then, that must be the woful objects of derision, and that of God himself, who would have crowned them with glory. I know when the Scripture speaks of God's laughing and mocking, it is not to be understood literally, but after the manner of men: but this may suffice us, that it will be such an act of God to the tormenting of the sinner, which he cannot more fitly conceive or express under any other notion or name, than these.

Sect. V. 5. Consider who shall be God's executioners of their torment; and that is, First, Satan; Secondly, Themselves. First, He that was here so successful in drawing them from Christ, will then be the instrument of their punishment, for yielding to his temptations. It was a pitiful sight to see the man possessed, that was bound with chains, and lived among the tombs: and that other that would be cast into the fire and into the water; but, alas! that was nothing to the torment that Satan puts them to in hell:^a that is the reward he will give them for all their service; for their rejecting the commands of God, and forsaking Christ, and neglecting their souls at his persuasion. Ah, if they had served Christ as faithfully as they did Satan, and had forsaken all for the love of him, he would have given them a better reward. 2. And it is most just, also, that they should there be their own tormentors, that they may see that their whole destruction is of themselves; and they who were wilfully the meritorious cause, should also be the efficient in their own sufferings: and then who can they complain of but themselves? And they will be no more able to cease their self-tormenting, than men that we see in a deep melancholy, that will by no arguments be taken off from their sorrows.

Sect. VI. 6. Consider, also, how that their torment will be universal, not upon one part alone, while the rest are free; but

^z See also Psal. xxxvii. 13.

^a *Utrum ignis gehennæ sit corporeus, lege plenissime disserentem D. Jo. Reigoldum de Lib. Apocryp. Prælect. 51—59.*

as all have joined in the sin, so must they all partake of the torment. The soul, as it was the chief in sinning, shall be the chief in suffering; and as it is of a more spiritual and excellent nature than bodies are, so will its torments as far exceed our present bodily sufferings.^b And as the joys of the soul do far surpass all sensual pleasures, and corporal contentments; so do the pains of the soul surpass those corporal pains; and as the martyrs did triumph in the very flames, because their souls were full of joy, though their bodies were in pain; so, though these damned creatures could enjoy all their bodily pleasures, yet the soul's sufferings would take away the sweetness of them all.

And it is not only a soul, but a sinful soul that must suffer; the guilt which still remains upon it, will make it fit for the wrath of God to work upon; as fire will not burn, except the fuel be combustible: but if the wood be dry, or it light upon straw, how fiercely will it burn then! Why, the guilt of their former sins will be as tinder to gunpowder, to the damned soul, to make the flames of hell to take hold upon them with fury.

And as the soul, so also the body must bear its part. That body that must needs be pleased, whatsoever become of its eternal safety, shall now be paid for all its unlawful pleasures; that body which was so carefully looked to, so tenderly cherished, so curiously dressed; that body which could not endure heat or cold, or an ill smell, or a loathsome sight: oh, what must it now endure! how are its haughty looks now taken down! how little will those flames regard its comeliness and beauty! But as death did not regard it, nor the worms regard it, but as freely feed upon the face of the proud and lustful dames, and the

^b Duplex damnatorum pœna est in gehenna, nam et mentem urit tristitia, et corpus flamma.—*Bern. de Medit. Gehennalis Supplicii.* Patietur etiam corpus, non quia sentire quid sine carne non possit anima, sed quia necesse est illam etiam cum carne sentire. Quantum enim ad agendum de suo sufficit, tantum et ad patiendum: ad agendum autem minus de suo sufficit. Habet enim de suo solum modo cogitare, velle, cupere, disponere; ad perficiendum autem, operam carnis expectat. Sic itaque et ad patiendum societatem carnis expostulat, ut tam plenè per eam pati possit, quam sine eà plenè agere non potuit.—*Tertul. de Resur. Carnis*, c. 17. p. 335. Negent operarum societatem, ut merito possint etiam mercedem negare. Non sit particeps in sententia caro, si non fuerit et in causa. Sola anima revocetur, si sola decedit. At enim non magis sola decedit, quam sola decurrit, illud unde decedit, vitam hanc dico. Adeo autem non sola anima transigit vitam, ut nec cogitatus licet solos licet non ad effectum per carnem deductos, auferamus à collegio carnis. Siquidem et in carne, et cum carne, et per carnem agitur ab anima, quod agitur in corde.—*Tertul. de Resur. Carnis*, c. 15. p. 333.

heart of the most ambitious lords or princes, as if they had been but beggars or brutes ; so will their tormentors then as little pity their tenderness, or reverence their lordliness, when they shall be raised from their graves to their eternal doom. Those eyes which were wont to be delighted with curious sights, and to feed themselves upon beauteous and comely objects, must then see nothing but what shall amaze and terrify them ; an angry, sin-revenging God above them, and those saints whom they scorned, enjoying the glory which they have lost ; and about them will be only devils and damned souls ; ah, then, how sadly will they look back and say, 'Are all the merry meetings, our feasts, our plays, our wanton toys, our games and revels, come to this ?' Then those ears which were wont to be delighted with music, shall hear the shrieks and cries of their damned companions ; children crying out against their parents, that gave them encouragement and example in evil, but did not teach them the fear of the Lord ; husbands crying out upon their wives, and wives upon their husbands ; masters and servants cursing each other ; ministers and people, magistrates and subjects, charging their misery upon one another, for discouraging in duty, conniving in sin, and being silent or formal, when they should have plainly told one another of their misery, and forewarned them of this danger. Thus will soul and body be companions in calamity.^c

Sect. VII. 7. And the greater by far will their torments be, because they shall have no comfort left to help to mitigate them. In this life, when a minister foretold them of hell, or conscience began to trouble their peace, they had comforts enough at hand to relieve them : their carnal friends were all ready to speak comfort to them, and promise them that all should be well with them ; but now they have not a word of

^c Hanc denique carnis speciem, arcem animæ, etiam Dominus in sugillatione cogitationum taxat, 'Quid cogitatis in cordibus vestris nequam?' et 'Qui conspexerit mulierem ad concupiscendum,' &c. Adeo et sine opere et sine effectu, cogitatus carnis est actus ; sed etsi in cerebro, vel in medio superciliorum discrimine, vel ubi philosophis placet, principalitas sensuum consecrata est, quod Hegemonicon appellatur, 'Caro erit omne animæ cogitatorium.' Nunquam anima sine carne est, quamdiu in carne est. Nihil non cum illa agit, sine qua non est. Quære adhuc an cogitatus quoque per carnem administrentur, qui per carnem dignoscuntur extrinsecus. Volatet aliquid anima ; vultus operatur indicium. Facies intentionum omnium speculum est. Negent factorum societatem, cui negare non possunt cogitatorium. Et illi quidem delinquentias carnis enumerant, ergo peccatrix tenebitur supplicio.—*Tert. de Resurrect. Carnis*, c. 15.

comfort either for others or themselves. Formerly they had their business, their company, their mirth, to drive away their fears; they could think away their sorrows, or play them away, or sleep them away, or at least, time did wear them away; but now all these remedies are vanished. They had a hard, a presumptuous and unbelieving heart, which was a wall to defend them against troubles of mind; but now their experience hath banished these, and left them naked to the fury of those flames. Yea, formerly Satan himself was their comforter, and would unsay all that the minister had said against them, as he did to our first mother: 'Hath God said, Ye shall not eat? ye shall not surely die.' So doth he now; 'Doth God tell you, that you shall lie in hell? It is no such matter; God is more merciful; he doth but tell you so, to fright you from sinning: who would lose his present pleasures, for the fear of that which he never saw? Or, if there be a hell, what need you to fear it? Are not you Christians, and shall you not be saved by Christ? Was not his blood shed for you? Ministers may tell you what they please; they delight to fright men, that they may be masters of their consciences, and therefore would make them believe that they shall all be damned, except they will fit themselves to their precise humour.' Thus, as the Spirit of Christ is the comforter of the saints, so Satan is the comforter of the wicked; for he knows if he should now disquiet them, they would no longer serve him; or if fears or doubts should begin to trouble them, they would bethink themselves of their danger, and so escape it. Never was a thief more careful lest he should awake the people, when he is robbing the house, than Satan is careful not to awaken a sinner. And as a cut-purse will look you in the face, and hold you in a tale, that you may never suspect him, while he is picking your pockets; so will Satan labour to keep men from all doubts or jealousies, or sorrowful thoughts. But when the sinner is dead, and he hath his prey, and his strata-gem hath had success, then he hath done flattering and comforting them. While the sight of sin and misery might have helped to save them, he took all the pains he could to hide it from their eyes; but when it is too late, and there is no hope left, he will make them see and feel to the utmost. Oh! which way will the forlorn sinner then look for comfort? They that drew him into the snare, and promised him safety, do now forsake him, and are forsaken themselves. His ancient comforts are taken from him, and the righteous God, whose forewarn-

ings he made light of, will now made good his word against him to the least tittle.

Sect. VIII. 8. But the great aggravation of this misery will be its eternity.^d That when a thousand millions of ages are past, their torments are as fresh to begin as at the first day. If there were any hope of an end, it would ease them to foresee it; but when it must be for ever so, that thought is intolerable: much more will the misery itself be. They were never weary of sinning, nor ever would have been, if they had lived eternally upon earth, and now God will not be weary of plaguing them. They never heartily repented of their sin, and God will never repent him of their suffering. They broke the laws of the eternal God, and therefore shall suffer eternal punishment. They knew it was an everlasting kingdom which they refused when it was offered them, and therefore what wonder if they be everlastingly shut out of it; it was their immortal souls that were guilty of the trespass, and therefore must immortally suffer the pains. Oh, now, what happy men would they think themselves, if they might have lain still in their graves, or continued dust, or suffered no worse than the gnawing of those worms! Oh! that they might but there lie down again; what a mercy now would it be to die; and how will they call and cry out for it, 'O death, whither art thou now gone? Now come and cut off this doleful life! Oh! that these pains would break my heart, and end my being! Oh! that I might once die at last!^e Oh! that I never had a being!' These groans will the thoughts of eternity wring from their hearts. They were wont to think the sermon long, and prayer long; how long then will they think these endless torments? What difference is there betwixt the length of their pleasures and of their pains? The one continued but a moment, but the other endureth through all

^d Horrendo modo fit miseris mors sine morte, finis sine fine, defectus sine defectu; quia mors semper vivit, et finis semper incipit, et defectus deficere nescit. Mors perimit et non extinguit; dolor cruciat, sed nullatenus pavorem fugat; flamma comburit, sed nequaquam tenebras excutit.—*Greg. Moral.* lib. ix. I approve not learned Parker's judgment about the desert of eternal suffering, as arising from the eternity or perpetuity of sinning, which he taketh from Scotus and Mirandula, lib. iv. de Descensu, pp. 164, 165.

^e Quando istinc excessum fuerit, nullus jam pœnitentiæ locus est, nullus satisfactionis effectus: hic vita aut amittitur aut tenetur: hic saluti æternæ cultu Dei, et fructu fidei providetur.—*Cypr. ad Demetrian.* lib. xxii. p. 331. Ubi hic purgatorium pontificiorum? Æterna autem et sine fine sunt à Deo bona, propter hoc et amissio eorum æterna et sine fine est.—*Iren. adv. Hæres.* lib. i. p. (mibi) 610.

eternity. Oh ! that sinners would lay this thought to heart ! Remember how time is almost gone. Thou art standing all this while at the door of eternity ; and death is waiting to open the door, and put thee in. Go sleep out but a few more nights, and stir up and down on earth a few more days, and then thy nights and days shall end ; thy thoughts and cares, and displeasures, and all shall be devoured by eternity ; thou must enter upon the state which shall never be changed. As the joys of heaven are beyond our conceiving, so also are the pains of hell. Everlasting torment is inconceivable torment.

Sect. IX. Object. But I know if it be a sensual unbeliever that readeth all this, he will cast it by with disdain, and say, ‘ I will never believe that God will thus torment his creatures. What, to delight in their torture ! And that for everlasting ! and all this for the faults of a short time ; it is incredible. How can this stand with the infiniteness of his mercy ? I would not thus torment the worst enemy that I have in the world, and yet my mercifulness is nothing to God’s. These are but threats to awe men ; I will not believe them.

Ans. Wilt thou not believe ? I do not wonder if thou be loth to believe so terrible tidings to thy soul, as these are ; which if they were believed and apprehended, indeed, according to their weight, would set thee a trembling and roaring in the anguish of horror day and night. And I do as little wonder that the devil who ruleth thee, should be loth, if he can hinder it, to suffer thee to believe it. For if thou didst believe it, thou wouldst spare no cost or pains to escape it.^f But go to : If

^f Credunt Judæi quod ex Israelitis solis tria genera mortuorum in die judicii sint resuscitanda, quorum unum futurum sit Israelitarum probissimorum : alterum improbissimorum et impiissimorum ; tertium mediocrium, qui non minus bene quam male operati fuerint. Probos illos e vestigio ad vitam æternam inscriptum obsignatumque improbos autem in gehennam, sive ignem infernalem abjectum iri dicunt. Mediocres vero istos peccatores per spatium Chadaschim sive mensium tantummodo duodecim pro peccatis ipsorum in inferno torquebuntur ; deinde corpora eorum consumerentur, ventusque cineres eorum diffundendo dispergit subter plantas pedum justorum, &c.—*Sic R. Bechar. Talmudo. Magno ut Buxtorf. Synag. Jud. l. pp. 25—27.* Ad hanc hæresin appropinquat doctrina papistarum. Non est vera vita nisi ubi fæliciter vivitur ; nec vera incorruptio, nisi ubi salus nullo dolore corrumpitur. Ubi autem infelix non finitur, ut ita dicam, mors ipsa non moritur ; et ubi dolor perpetuus non interimit, sed affligit, ipsa corruptio non sinitur.—*Aug. Enchirid. c. 92.* Nisi per indebitam misericordiam nemo liberatur et nisi per debitum judicium nemo damnatur.—*Aug. Enchirid. c. 94.* Vindictam divinam certò futuram super impios et recipiscere nolentes, obsignant quotidie tot exempla iræ Dei quæ nobis ante oculos ponuntur.—*Pol, in Ezek 11. p. 191.*

thou wilt read on, either thou shalt believe it before thou stirrest, or prove thyself an infidel or pagan. Tell me then, dost thou believe Scripture to be the word of God? If thou do not, thou art no more a Christian than thy horse is, or than a Turk is. For what ground have we besides Scripture to believe that Jesus Christ did come into the world, or die for man? If thou believe not these, I have nothing here to do with thee, but refer thee to the second part of this book, where I have proved Scripture to be the word of God. But if thou do believe this to be so, and yet dost not believe that the same Scripture is true, thou art far worse than either infidel or pagan. For the vilest pagan durst hardly charge their idol-gods to be liars: and darest thou give the lie to the God of heaven; and accuse him of speaking that which shall not come to pass; and that in such absolute threats, and plain expressions? But if thou darest not stand to this, but dost believe Scripture both to be the word of God, and to be true, then I shall presently convince thee of the truth of these eternal torments; wilt thou believe if a prophet should tell it thee? Why read it then in the greatest prophets, Moses, David, and Isaiah. (Deut. xxxii. 22; Psal. xi. 6, and ix. 17; Isai. xxx. 33.) Or wilt thou believe one that was more than a prophet? Why, hear then what John Baptist saith, (Matt. iii. 10; Luke iii. 17.) Or wilt thou believe if an apostle should tell thee? Why, hear what one saith, where he calls it the "vengeance of eternal fire; and the blackness of darkness for ever." (Jude 7, 13.) Or what if thou have it from an apostle that had been wrapt up in revelations into the third heaven, and seen things unutterable, wilt thou believe then? Why take it then from Paul, "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." (2 Thess. i. 7—9.) And "that they all might be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thess. ii. 12.) So Rom. ii. 5—7. Or wilt thou believe it from the beloved apostle, who was so taken up in revelations, and saw it, as it were, in his visions? Why see then Rev. xx. 10, 15. They are said there to be "cast into the lake of fire, and tormented day and night for ever." So Rev. xxi. 8; so 2 Pet. ii. 17. Or wilt thou believe it from the mouth of Christ himself the Judge? Why read it then: As therefore

the tares are gathered, and burnt in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this world: the Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity: and shall cast them into a furnace of fire, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, &c. (Matt. vii. 10, and xiii. 40—42, 49, 50.) So Matt. xviii. 8, 9: so Mark ix. 43, 44, 46, 48: where he repeateth it three times over, “Where their worm never dieth, and their fire is not quenched.” And “Then shall he say to them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was, &c. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into life eternal.” (Matt. xxv. 41, 46.)

What sayest thou now to all this; wilt thou not believe? If thou wilt not believe Christ, I know not whom thou wilt believe: and therefore it is in vain to persuade thee any further: only let me tell thee, the time is at hand when thou wilt easily believe, and that without any preaching or arguing; when thou seest the great and terrible day, and hearest the condemning sentence passed, and art thyself thrust down to hell, (as Luke x. 11,) then thou shalt believe, and never doubt again: and do not say but thou wast told so much. Surely, he that so much dissuades thee from believing, doth yet believe and tremble himself. (Jam. ii. 10.)

And whereas thou thinkest that God is more merciful,^g why, surely, he knows best his own mercifulness. His mercy will not cross his truth. Cannot God be infinite in mercy, except he save the wilful and rebellious? Is a judge unmerciful for condemning malefactors? Mercy and justice have their several objects. Thousands of humble, believing, obedient souls shall know to their eternal comfort, that God is merciful, though the refusers of his grace shall lie under justice. God will then force thy conscience to confess it in hell, that God who condemned thee was yet merciful to thee. Was it not mercy to be made a

^g Sic diabolico spiritu pleni innumeras accusationes inferunt factori nostro, cum et spiritum vitæ nobis donaverit, et legem omnibus aptam posuerit, et nolunt justum esse judicium Dei: qua propter et alterum quendam excogitarunt patrem neque curantem; neque providentem eorum, quæ sunt erga nos, aut etiam consentientem omnibus peccatis.—*Irenæus adv. Har.* lib. v. p. 609. Jam scies nequitia sua hanc eos meruisse fortunam: nec quicquam accidisse, quod non sit his, si in contumacia perseverarent, antea prædictum. Ita prius eos deseruisse comprehendes, quam esse desertos.—*Minut. Felix. Octav.* p. 394.

reasonable creature ; and to have patience to endure thy many years' provocations, and waiting upon thee from sermon to sermon ; desiring and entreating thy repentance and return ? Was it not mercy to have the Son of God, with all his blood and merits, freely offered thee, if thou wouldst but have accepted him to govern and to save thee ? Nay, when thou hadst neglected and refused Christ once, or twice, yea, a hundred times, that God should yet follow thee with invitations from day to day ? And shalt thou wilfully refuse mercy to the last hour, and then cry out that God will not be so unmerciful as to condemn thee ? Thy conscience will smite thee for thy madness, and tell thee, that God was merciful in all this, though such as thou do perish for thy wilfulness. Yea, the sense of the greatness of his mercy, will then be a great part of thy torment.^h

And whereas thou thinkest the pain to be greater than the offence, that is because thou art not a competent judge. Thou knowest what pain is, but thou knowest not the thousandth part of the evil of sin. Shall not the righteous Judge of the world do justly ? Nay, it is no more than thou didst choose thyself. Did not God set before thee life and death, and tell thee, if thou wouldst accept of the government of Christ, and renounce thy lusts, that then thou shouldst have eternal life ? And if thou wouldst not have Christ, but the world or flesh to rule over thee, thou shouldst then endure eternal torments ? Did not he offer

^h When I read in Spanhemius's 'Posthum. Vind. against Amyraldus,' and some other divines (that love not to be named in opposition), both pages filled with extenuations of God's mercy to the wicked, as if because he gives them not effectual grace to believe, therefore Christ's dying for them, in Davenport and Camero's middle sense, is no mercy to them, but a mocking of them ; and therefore conclude that Christ died not for them at all : it makes me tremble to think that learned divines, in the heat of dispute, should speak so desperately against God ; and yet this is almost all they have to say. I entreat such to consider, seeing conscience is the great tormentor of the damned in hell ; and the rejecting of Christ, and the abuse of Gospel-mercy, will be the greatest thing that God and conscience will charge them with ; whether these men's doctrine, if the damned could believe it, would not make hell to be no hell to them, or more easy ? If they could say, Christ never died for me at all ; or if he had, yet it had been no mercy, because God would not give me faith in him : it was merely God's will that I should be damned that brought me hither, which I could not resist : if they could thus lay all on God, where were the worm of conscience ? Shall we deny that which is clear and plain, because we cannot comprehend that which is hid and secret ? Shall we say, that it is not so, which we see to be so, because we cannot find why it is so ? saith Augustine excellently, 'Lib. de De Bono Persever.' c. 14 ; which saying I would desire the persons before mentioned, well to consider ; "Christ makes it the perfection of our heavenly Father, to do good in common cases, to the just and unjust,"—Matt. v. 45, 48.

thee thy choice, and bid thee take which of these thou wouldst ; yea, and entreat thee to choose aright ? And dost thou now cry out of severity, when thou hast but the consequence of thy wilful choice ? But it is not thy accusing God of cruelty that shall serve thy turn ; instead of procuring thy escape, or the mitigation of thy torments, it will but make thy burden the more heavy.

And whereas thou sayst that thou wouldst not so torment thy own enemy ; I answer, There is no reason that thou shouldst : for is it all one to offend a crawling worm of the earth, and to offend the eternal glorious God ? Thou hast no absolute dominion over thine enemy, and there may be some fault in thyself as well as in him ; but with God and us the case is contrary. Yet thou makest nothing of killing a flea if it do but bite thee ; yea, an hundred of them, if they did not touch thee, and yet never accusest thyself of cruelty. Yea, thou wilt torment thy ox all his life-time with toilsome labour, and kill him at last, though he never deserved ill of thee, nor disobeyed thee, and though thou hast over him but the borrowed authority of a superior fellow-creature, and not the sovereign power of the absolute Creator. Yea, how commonly dost thou take away the lives of birds, and beasts, and fishes ! Many times a great many of lives must be taken away to make for thee but one meal. How many deaths, then, have been suffered in obedience to thy will, from thy first age to thy last hour ; and all this without any desert of the creature ! And must it yet seem cruelty, that the sovereign Creator, who is ten thousand times more above thee than thou art above a flea or a toad, should execute his justice upon such a contemner of his authority ? But I have given you some reasons of this before.

Sect. X. But methinks I perceive the obstinate sinner desperately resolving, If I must be damned, there is no remedy ; rather than I will live so precisely as the Scripture requireth, I will put it to the venture ; I shall escape as well as the rest of my neighbours, and as the most of the world, and we will even bear it as well as we can. Answ. Alas, poor creature ! I wish thou didst but know what it is that thou dost so boldly venture on ; I dare say thou wouldst sleep this night but very unquietly. Wilt thou leave thyself no room for hope ? Art thou such a malicious, implacable enemy to Christ and thy own soul ? And dost thou think, indeed, that thou canst bear the wrath of God, and go away so easily with these eternal torments ! Yet let me beg this

of thee, that before thou dost so flatly resolve, thou wouldst lend me thine attention to these few questions which I shall put to thee, and weigh them with the reason of a man ; and if then thou canst bear these pains, I shall give thee over and say no more.

First : Who art thou that thou shouldst bear the wrath of God ? Art thou a God, or art thou a man ? What is thy strength to undergo so much ? Is it not as the strength of wax or stubble to resist the fire ; or as chaff to the wind ; or as the dust before the fierce whirlwind ? Was he not as stout a man as thyself, who cried to God, " Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro ; and wilt thou pursue the dry stubble ? " ¹ (Job xiii. 25 ;) and he that confesseth, " I am a worm and no man." (Phil. ii. 26.) If thy strength were as iron, and thy bones as brass, thou couldst not bear. If thy foundation were as the earth, and thy power as the heavens, yet shouldst thou perish at the breath of his indignation. How much more when thou art but a little piece of a worm, creeping, breathing clay, kept a few days from stinking, and from being eaten with worms by the mere support and favour of him whom thou thus resistest.

Secondly : If thou art able to wrestle with the indignation of the Almighty ; why then dost thou tremble at the signs of his power, or wrath ? Do not the terrible thunder-claps sometimes affright thee ; or the lightning-flashes, or that unseen power which goes with it, in rending in pieces mighty oaks, and tearing down the strongest buildings ? If thou hadst been in the church of Withicombe, in Devonshire, when the lightning broke in, and scorched and burnt the people, and left the brains and hair upon the pillars, would it not have made thee afraid ? If thou be put in a place where the plague doth rage, so that it comes to so many thousand a week, doth it not astonish thee, to see men that were well within a few days to be thrown into the graves by heaps and multitudes ? If thou hadst stood by, when Pharaoh and his people were so strangely plagued, and at last drowned together in the sea ; or when the earth swallowed up Dathan, Abiram, and their companies, and the people fled away at the cry, lest the earth should swallow them up also ; or when Elias brought fire from heaven to consume the captains and their companies : would not any of these sights have daunted thy spirit ? Why, how then canst thou bear the hellish plagues ?

Thirdly : Tell me also, if thou be so strong, and thy heart so

¹ Read Psal. lxxvii. 18 ; Exod. ix. 28.

stout, why do those small sufferings so dismay thee which befall thee here? If thou have but a toothache, or a fit of the gout, or stone, what groans dost thou utter; what moans dost thou make! The house is filled with thy constant complaints: thy friends about thee are grieved at thy pains, and stand over thee condoling thy miserable state. If thou shouldst but lose a leg or an arm, thou wouldst make a greater matter of it. If thou lose but a friend; if thou lose thine estate, and fall into poverty, and beggary, and disgrace; how heavily wouldst thou bear any one of these. And yet all these laid together will be one day accounted a happy state, in comparison of that which is suffered in hell. Let me see thee shake off the most painful sickness, and make as light of convulsive, epileptic, arthritic, nephritic pains, or such-like diseases, when they seize upon thee, and then the strength of thy spirit will appear. Alas, how many such boasters as thyself have I seen made stoop and eat their words! And when God hath but let out a little of his wrath, that Pharaoh who before asked, 'Who is the Lord, that I should let all go for him?' hath turned his tune, and cried, 'I have sinned.'

Fourthly: If thy stout spirit do make so light of hell, why then doth the approach of death so much affright thee? Didst thou never find the sober thoughts of death to raise a kind of dread in thy mind? Wast thou never in a fever, or consumption, or any disease wherein thou didst receive the sentence of death? If thou wast not, thou wilt be before long; and then when the physician hath plainly told thee that there is no hopes, oh, how cold it strikes to thy heart! Why is death to men the king of terrors else? and the stoutest champions then do abate their courage. Oh! but the grave would be accounted a palace or a paradise, in comparison of that place of torment which thou desperately slightest.

Fifthly: If all this be nothing, go try thy strength by some corporeal torment; as Bilney, before he went to the stake, would first try his finger in the candle; so do thou. Hold thy finger awhile in the fire, and feel there whether thou canst endure the fire of hell. Austin mentioneth a chaste christian woman, who being tempted to uncleanness by a lewd ruffian, she desired him for her sake to hold his finger one hour in the fire; he answereth, 'It is an unreasonable request;' 'How much more unreasonable is it,' said she, 'that I should burn in hell for the satisfying your lust?' So say I to thee: If it be an intolerable thing to suffer the heat of the fire for a year, or a day, or an

hour, what will it be to suffer ten thousand times more for ever? What, if thou wert to suffer Lawrence's death, to be roasted upon a gridiron; or to be scraped or pricked to death as other martyrs were; or if thou wert to feed upon toads for a year together. If thou couldst not endure such things as these, how wilt thou endure the eternal flames?

Sixthly: Tell me yet again, If hell be so small a matter, why canst thou not endure so much as the thoughts, or the mention of it? If thou be alone, thou darest scarcely think of hell, for fear of raising disquietness in thy spirit. If thou be in company, thou canst not endure to have any serious speech of it, lest it spoil the sport, and mar the mirth, and make thee tremble, as Felix did when Paul was discoursing of the judgment to come. Thou canst not endure to hear a minister preach of hell, but thou gnashest thy teeth, and disdainest him, and reproachest his sermon, as enough to drive men to desperation, or make them mad. And canst thou endure the torments, when thou canst not endure so much as to hear of them? Alas! man, to hear thy judgment from the mouth of Christ, and to feel the execution, will be another kind of matter, than to hear it from a minister.

Seventhly: Furthermore, What is the matter that the rich man in hell, mentioned in Luke xvi., could not make as light of it as thou dost? Was not he as likely a man to bear it as thyself? Why doth he so cry out that he is tormented in the flames; and stoop so low, as to beg a drop of water of a beggar that he had but a little before despised at his gates; and to be beholden to him, that had been beholden to the dogs to lick his sores?

Also, what aileth thy companions, who were as resolute as thyself, that when they lie a dying, their courage is so cooled, and their haughty expressions are so greatly changed? They who had the same spirits and language as thou hast now, and made as light of all the threats of the word; yet when they see they are going into another world, how pale do they look; how faintly do they speak; how dolefully do they complain and groan! They send for the minister then, whom they despised before, and desire to be prayed for, and would be glad to die in the state of those whom they would not be persuaded to imitate in their lives; except it be here and there a desperate wretch, who is given over to a more than hellish hardness of heart. Why cannot these make as light of it as thou?

Eighthly: Yet further, If thou be so fearless of that eternal

misery, why is the least foretaste of it so terrible? Didst thou never feel such a thing as a tormenting conscience? If thou hast not, thou shalt do. Didst thou never see and speak with a man that lived in desperation, or in some degree of those wounds of spirit that were near despair? How uncomfortable was their conference! How burdensome their lives! Nothing doth them good which they possess; the sight of friends, or house, or goods, which refresh others, is a trouble to them; they feel no sweetness in meat or drink; they are weary of life, and fearful of death. What is the matter with these men? If the misery of the damned itself can be endured, why cannot they more easily endure these little sparks?

Ninthly: Again, tell me faithfully, what if thou shouldst but see the devil appear to thee in some terrible shape, would it not daunt thee? What, if thou shouldst meet him in thy way home, or he should show himself to thee at night in thy bed-chamber, would not thy heart fail thee, and thy hair stand on end? I could name thee those that have been as confident as thyself, who, by such a sight, have been so appalled, that they were in danger of being driven out of their wits. Or, what, if some damned soul, of thy former acquaintance, should appear to thee in some bodily likeness, would not this amaze thee? What fears do people live in, whose houses or persons have been but haunted with spirits, though they have only heard some noises, and seen some sights, but never felt any hurt upon their bodies? Alas! what is this to the torments of hell? Canst thou not endure a shadow to appear before thee? Oh, how wilt thou endure to live with them for ever, where thou shalt have no other company but devils and the damned; and shalt not only see them, but be tormented with them, and by them! And as incredible a matter as this seems to thee, if thy thorough conversion prevent it not, thou knowest not how very few months thou shalt be out of this estate.

Tenthly and lastly: Let me ask thee one more question, if the wrath of God be to be made so light of as thou dost, why did the Son of God himself make so great a matter of it? when he, who was perfectly innocent himself, had taken upon him the payment of our debt, and stood in our room, and bore that punishment that we had deserved, it makes him sweat forth water and blood; it makes the Lord of life cry, "My soul is heavy, even to the death." It makes him cry out upon the cross, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?"

Surely, if any one could have borne these sufferings easily, it would have been Jesus Christ. He had another measure of strength to bear it than thou hast.

And let me tell thee one thing, which every one understandeth not ; thou wilt have sins of a more heinous nature and degree to suffer for, than ever were laid upon Jesus Christ. For Christ suffered only for the breaches of the covenant of works,^k and not for the violation of the covenant of grace (properly so called, that is, not for the final non-performance of the conditions of this covenant). There was no man's final prevailing unbelief, impenitency, or rejecting of Christ, that did lie upon Christ. Howsoever the aggravation of all men's sins might aggravate his burden, yet the punishment due to those sins particularly was not like the punishment which is due to thine. For as the first covenant gave not so great a reward, so neither did it threaten so great a penalty as the latter doth. And the penalty which the new covenant threateneth, Christ never underwent. So that the punishment which thou must suffer, is that which the Apostle speaks of, "Of how much sorer punishment," &c. (Heb. x. 29,) and that fearful looking-for of judgment and fire, which devoureth the adversaries. (Heb. vi. 8.) Wo to poor sinners for their mad security ! Do they think to find it tolerable to them, which was so heavy to Christ ? Nay, the Son of God is cast into a bitter agony, and bloody sweat, and dolorous complaints, under the curse of the law alone ; and yet the feeble, foolish creature makes nothing to bear also the curse of the Gospel. The good Lord bring these men to their right minds by repentance, lest they buy their wit at too dear a rate.

Sect. XI. And thus I have showed you somewhat of their

^k It is a wonder that learned sober divines should deny this ; as if either the new law did threaten hell to any but final, impenitent unbelievers, and rebels to Christ, or Christ had ever died for such final rebellion. This is such a doctrine of universal redemption, as a Jesuit would abhor. Read Matth. Martinus and Lud. Crocius's 'Theses in the Synod of Dort,' on the second article, among suffrages. Is not that of great Camero, an easy, plain truth, 'Quæst. in Hebr.' (operum folio), p. 413. Certe nemo servatur nisi fœdere observato. Ergo fœdus quo servantur homines, diversum est ab eo quo à nemine observato nemo servatur : i. e., Certainly no man is saved, but by covenant performed or kept ; therefore, the covenant which men are saved by, is not the same with that which saveth no man, being performed by none. And learned Parker saith : Descendit eò sua in exinanitione Christus, quò primus Adam suo lapsu cecidit, ut nos inde liberaret.—*Parker de Descensu*, lib. iii. p. 1. And yet I dare not nor will not say so much this way as the learned Parker doth, lib. iv. pp. 164, 165 ; nor will I repeat it.

misery, who miss of this rest prepared for the saints. And now, reader, I demand thy resolution, what use thou wilt make of all this : shall it all be lost to thee ; or, wilt thou, as thou art alone, consider of it in good earnest ? Thou hast cast by many a warning of God, wilt thou do so by this also ? Take heed what thou dost, and how thou so resolvest. God will not always stand warning and threatening. The hand of revenge is lifted up, the blow is coming, and wo to him, whoever he be, on whom it lighteth. Little thinkest thou how near thou standest to thy eternal state, and how near the pit thou art dancing in thy greatest jollity. If thy eyes were but opened, as they will be shortly, thou wouldst see all this that I have spoken before thine eyes, without stirring from the place, I think, in which thou standest. Dost thou throw by the book, and say, ‘ It speaks of nothing but hell and damnation ? ’ Thus thou usest also to complain of the minister ; but wouldst thou not have us tell thee of these things ? Should we be guilty of the blood of thy soul, by keeping silent that which God hath charged us upon pain of death to make known ? Wouldst thou perish in ease and silence, and also have us to perish with thee, rather than to awake thee, or displease thee, by speaking the truth ? If thou wilt be guilty of such inhuman cruelty, yet God forbid we should be guilty of such most sottish folly ! there are few preachers so simple, but they know that this kind of preaching is the ready way to be hated of their hearers. And the desire of applause, and the favour of men, is so natural to all men, that I think there are few that delight in such a displeasing way. Our temptations to flattery and man-pleasing are too strong for that. But I beseech thee, consider, are these things true, or are they not ? If they were not true, I would heartily join with thee against any minister that should offer to preach them, and to affright poor people when there is no cause ; and, I should think, such preachers did deserve death or banishment. But if every word of these threatenings be the words of God, and if they be as true as thou livest and readest this, what a wretch art thou that wouldst not hear it, or consider it ! Why, what is the matter ? If thou be sure that thou art one of the people of God, this doctrine will be a comfort to thee, and not a terror : but if thou be yet carnal and unregenerate, methinks thou shouldst be as afraid to hear of heaven as of hell, except the bare name of heaven or salvation be sufficient. Sure, there is no doctrine concerning heaven in all the Scripture that

can give thee any comfort, but upon the supposal of thy conversion; what comfort is it to thee, to hear that there is a rest remaining to the people of God, except thou be one of them? Nay, what more terrible, than to read of Christ and salvation for others, when thou must be shut out? Therefore, except thou wouldst have a minister to preach a lie, it is all one to thee for any comfort thou hast in it, whether he preach of heaven or hell to thee. His preaching heaven and mercy to thee, can be nothing else but to entreat thee to seek them, and not neglect or reject them; but he can make thee no promise of it, but upon the condition of thy obeying the Gospel; and his preaching hell, is but to persuade thee to avoid it. And is not this doctrine fit for thee to hear? Indeed, if thou wert quite past hope of escaping it, then it were in vain to tell thee of hell, but rather let thee take a few merry hours whilst thou mayst; but, as long as thou art alive, there is some hope of thy recovery, and therefore all means must be used to awake thee from thy lethargy. Oh, that some Jonas had this point in hand to cry in your ears, "Yet a few days, and the rebellious shall be destroyed;" till you were brought down on your knees in sackcloth and in ashes! Oh, if some John Baptist might cry it abroad, "Now is the axe laid to the root of the tree; every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire." Oh, that some son of thunder, who could speak as Paul, till the hearers tremble, were now to preach this doctrine to thee! Alas! as terribly as you think I speak, yet is it not the thousandth part of what must be felt; for what heart can now possibly conceive, or what tongue can express the dolours of those souls that are under the wrath of God? Ah, that ever blind sinners should wilfully bring themselves to such unspeakable misery! You will then be crying to Jesus Christ, 'Oh, mercy! oh, pity, pity, on a poor soul!' Why, I do now in the name of the Lord Jesus cry to thee, Oh, have mercy, have pity, man, upon thine own soul! shall God pity thee, who wilt not be entreated to pity thyself? If thy horse see but a pit before him, thou canst scarcely force him in. Balaam's ass would not be driven upon the drawn sword; and wilt thou so obstinately cast thyself into hell, when the danger is foretold thee? "Oh, who can stand before the Lord, and who can abide the fierceness of his anger?" (Nahum i. 6.) Methinks thou shouldst need no more words, but presently cast away thy soul-damning sins, and wholly deliver up thyself to Christ. Resolve on it im-

mediately, man, and let it be done, that I may see thy face in rest among the saints. The Lord persuade thy heart to strike this covenant without any longer delay : but if thou be hardened unto death, and there be no remedy, yet do not say another day, but that thou wast faithfully warned, and that thou hast a friend that would fain have prevented thy damnation.

CHAP. V.

The second Use, reprehending the general Neglect of this Rest, and exciting to Diligence in seeking it.

SECT. I. I come now to the second use which I shall raise from this doctrine of rest. If there be so certain and glorious rest for the saints, why is there no more industrious seeking after it in the world? One would think that a man that did but once hear of such unspeakable glory to be obtained, and did believe what he heareth to be true, should be transported with the vehemency of his desires after it, and should almost forget to eat or drink, and should mind and care for nothing else, and speak of and inquire after nothing else, but how to get assurance and possession of this treasure!¹ And yet people who hear it daily, and profess to believe it undoubted, as a fundamental article of their faith, do as little mind it, or care, or labour for it, and as much forget and disregard it, as if they had never heard of any such thing, or did not believe one word that they hear. And as a man that comes into America, and sees the natives regard more a piece of glass, or an old knife, than a piece of gold, may think, Surely these people never heard of the worth of gold, or else they would not exchange it for toys; so a man that looked only upon the lives of most men, and did not hear their contrary confessions, would think either these men never heard of heaven, or else they never heard of its excellency and glory: when, alas! they hear of it till they are weary of hearing; and it is offered to them so commonly, that they are tired with the tidings, and cry out as the Israelites, “Our soul is dried away, because there is nothing but this manna before our eyes.” (Numb. xi. 6.) And as the Indians, who live among the golden mines, do little regard it, but are

¹ Otiositas in Dei servitio est vorago, subtilius devorans otiantem.—*Wickliff. Dialog.* lib. iii. c. 16. fol. 71.

weary of the daily toil of getting it, when other nations will compass the world, and venture their lives, and sail through storms and waves to get it : so we that live where the Gospel groweth, where heaven is urged upon us at our doors, and the manna falls upon our tents, do little regard it, and wish these mines of gold were further from us, that we might not be put upon the toil of getting it, when some that want it, would be glad of it upon harder terms. Surely, though the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting, be the last article in their creed, it is not the least, nor therefore put last, that it should be last in their desires and endeavours.

Sect. II. I shall apply this reproof more particularly yet to four several sorts of men. First, To the carnal, worldly-minded man, who is so taken up in seeking the things below, that he hath neither heart nor time to seek this rest.

May I not well say to these men, as Paul to the Galatians, in another case, "Foolish sinners ! who hath bewitched you ?" It is not for nothing that divines use to call the world a witch ; for, as in witchcraft men's lives, senses, goods, or cattle, are destroyed by a strange, secret, unseen power of the devil, of which a man can give no natural reason ; so here, men will destroy their own souls in a way quite against their own knowledge ; and as witches will make a man dance naked, or do the most unseemly, unreasonable actions ; so the world doth bewitch men into brute beasts, and draw them some degrees beyond madness.^m Would not any man wonder, that is in his right wit, and hath but the spiritual use of reason, to see what riding and running, what scrambling and catching, there is for a thing of nought, while eternal rest lies by neglected ! What contriving and caring, what fighting and bloodshed, to get a step higher in the world than their brethren, while they neglect the kingly

^m Sic errant aliqui, et in tantam oblivionem et spiritualem phrenesin deveniunt, ut tanquam mortui à corde, omnem insumunt operam suam circa carnem ; sic intendentes tabernaculo suo ac si nunquam putent esse casurum. Veruntamen cadat necesse est, atque id quidem in brevi. Annon seipsos nescire videntur, qui sic dediti sunt carni et sanguini, ac si omnino nihil aliud quam carnem solam se esse reputent. Sic in vano accipientes animas suas, tanquam prorsus ignorent animas se habere ?—*Bern. Serm. 137.* Consider, man, thy own nobility ; that thou art called to a kingly dignity, a chosen nation, a holy priesthood. For the mystery of Christianity is strange from this world. The conspicuous glory of a king, and riches, are earthly things, corruptible, transitory, and perishing ; but that kingdom and riches, are things divine, celestial, and glorious, which shall never perish, never be dissolved : for they reign with the heavenly King in the heavenly church ; he is the first-begotten from the dead, and they also are the first-begotten.

dignity of the saints ! What insatiable pursuit of fleshly pleasures, whilst they look upon the praises of God, which is the joy of angels, as a tiring burden ! What unwearied diligence is there in raising their posterity, in enlarging their possessions, in gathering a little silver or gold ; yea, perhaps for a poor living from hand to mouth, while, in the meantime, their judgment is drawing near ; and yet how it shall go with them then, or how they shall live eternally, did never put them to the trouble of one hour's sober consideration.ⁿ What rising early, and sitting up late, and labouring and caring, year after year, to maintain themselves and their children in credit till they die ; but what shall follow after, that they never think on, as if it were only their work to provide for their bodies, and only God's work to provide for their souls ; whereas, God hath promised more to provide for their bodies, without their care, than for their souls, though indeed they must painfully serve his providence for both ; and yet these men cry to us, ' May not a man be saved without so much ado ? ' And may we not say, with more reason to them, ' May not a man have a little air on earth, a little credit or wealth, without so much ado ? ' or, at least, ' May not a man have enough to bring him to his grave without so much ado ? ' How early do they rouse up their servants to their labour ! ' Up, come away to work, we have this to do, and that to do ; ' but how seldom do they call them, ' Up, you have your souls to look to, you have everlasting life to provide for ; up to prayer, to the reading of the Scripture.' Alas, how rare is this language ! what a gadding up and down the world is here, like a company of ants upon a hillock, taking incessant pains to gather a treasure, which death, as the next passenger that comes by, will spurn abroad, as if it were such an excellent thing to die in the midst of wealth and honours ! or, as if it would be such a comfort to a man at death, or in another world, to think that he was a lord, or a knight, or a gentleman, or a rich man on earth ! For my part, whatever these men may profess or say to the contrary, I cannot but strongly suspect that, in heart, they are flat pagans, and do not believe that there is an eternal glory or misery, nor what the Scripture speaks of the way of obtaining it ; or, at least, that they do but

ⁿ Macarius Homil. xxvii. Curas et cupiditates nostras, quæ nostrum non opprimunt, sed obruunt gaudium, novis curis et votis tueri et alleviare studemus. Nil aliud facimus quam integrum onus pristinum retinere, et pondera nobis nova imponere.—*Niremb, de Arte Volunt.* lib. ii. c. 7. p. 112.

a little believe it, by the halves, and therefore think to make sure of earth, lest there be no such thing as heaven to be had ; and to hold fast that which they have in hand, lest if they let go that, in hope of better in another world, they should play the fools, and lose all. I fear, though the christian faith be in their mouths, lest that this be the faith which is next their hearts ; or else the lust of their senses doth overcome and suspend their reason, and prevail with their wills against the last practical conclusion of their understanding. What is the excellency of this earth, that it hath so many suitors and admirers : what hath this world done for its lovers and friends, that it is so eagerly followed, and painfully sought after, while Christ and heaven stand by, and few regard them ; or, what will the world do for them for the time to come ? The common entrance into it, is through anguish and sorrow. The passage through it, is with continual care, and labour, and grief. The passage out of it, is with the greatest sharpness and sadness of all. What, then, doth cause men so much to follow and affect it ? O sinful, unreasonable, bewitched men ! will mirth and pleasure stick close to you ; will gold and worldly glory prove fast friends to you in the time of your greatest need ; will they hear your cries in the day of your calamity ? If a man should say to you at the hour of your death, as Elias did to Baal's priests, " Cry aloud," &c. Oh, riches, or honour, now help us ! will they either answer,^o or relieve you ; will they go along with you to another world, and bribe the Judge, and bring you off clear ; or purchase you a room among the blessed ? Why then did so rich a man want a drop of water for his tongue ; or are the sweet morsels of present delight and honour, of more worth than the eternal rest : and will they recompense the loss of that enduring treasure ; can there be the least hope of any of these : why, what then is the matter ; is it only a room for our dead bodies, that we are so much beholden to the world for ? why, this is the last and longest courtesy that we shall receive from it. But we shall have this, whether we serve it or not ; and even that homely, dusty dwelling, it will not afford us always neither : it shall possess our dust, but till the great resurrection day. Why, how then doth the world deserve so well at men's

^o Yet Christ's saying, that it is as hard for a rich man to be saved as a camel to go through the eye of a needle, is not to be understood literally, it being a proverb which the Jews used of a thing very difficult. Vide Christoph. Cartwright, in ' Præfat. ante Annotat. in Gen.'

hands, that they should part with Christ and their salvation to be its followers? Ah, vile, deceitful world! how oft have we heard thy most faithful servants at last complaining, ‘Oh, the world hath deceived me, and undone me! it flattered me in my prosperity, but now it turns me off at death in my necessity! Ah, if I had as faithfully served Christ, as I have served it, he would not thus have cast me off, nor have left me thus comfortless and hopeless in the depth of misery! Thus do the dearest friends and favourites of the world complain at last of its deceit, or rather of their own self-deluding folly, and yet succeeding sinners will take no warning. So this is the first sort of neglecters of heaven which fall under this reproof.

Sect. III. 2. The second sort here to be reproved are, the profane,^p ungodly, presumptuous multitude, who will not be persuaded to be at so much pains for salvation as to perform the common, outward duties of religion: yea, though they are convinced that these duties are commanded by God, and see it before their eyes in the Scripture, yet will they not be brought to the constant practice of them. If they have the Gospel preached in the town where they dwell, it may be they will give the hearing to it one part of the day, and stay at home the other; or if the master come to the congregation, yet part of his family must stay at home. If they want the plain and powerful preaching of the Gospel, how few are they in a whole town that will either be at cost or pains to procure a minister, or travel a mile or two to hear abroad, though they will go many miles to the market for provisions for their bodies! The Queen of the South shall rise up in judgment with this generation, and condemn them; for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold a greater than Solomon doth, by his messengers, preach to them. The king of Nineveh shall rise up in judgment with them, and shall condemn them, for he repented at the preaching of Jonas; but when Jesus Christ sendeth his ambassadors to these men, they will scarcely go to hear them. (Matt. xii. 41, 42.) And though they know that the Scripture is the very law of God, by which they must live,

^p Utinam et nos assequamur sanitatem qui dissoluti sumus et ad omne bonum opus immobiles; neque habemus hominem, hoc est, humanam rationem, utpote comparati cum jumentis, ut portet nos in piscinam pœnitentiæ lachrymarum in quam qui primus ingreditur, sanatur. Nam qui pœnitentiam differt in tempora posteriora, non festinat hic pœnitere; qui procrastinat, non assequitur sanitatem. Primus igitur festina ingredi, ne mors te præoccupet.—*Theophylact. in Joan. c. 5.*

and by which they must be acquit or condemned in judgment; and that it is the property of every blessed man to delight in this law, and to meditate in it day and night; (Psal. i. 2;) yet will they not be at the pains to read a chapter once in a day, nor to acquaint their families with this doctrine of salvation. But if they carry a Bible to church, and let it lie by them all the week, this is the most use they make of it: and though they are commanded to pray without ceasing; (1 Thes. v. 17;) and to pray always, and not to wax faint; (Luke xviii. 1—3, &c.); to continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; (Col. iv. 2;) yet will they not be brought to pray constantly with their families, or in secret. Though Daniel would rather be cast to the lions than he would forbear for a while praying openly in his house, where his enemies might hear him three times a day; yet these men will rather venture to be an eternal prey to that roaring lion that seeks to devour them, than they will be at the pains thus to seek their safety.^a You may hear, in their houses, two oaths for one prayer; or if they do any thing this way, it is usually but a running over a few formal words which they have got on their tongue's end, as if they came on purpose to make a jest of prayer, and to mock God and their own souls. If they be in distress, or want any thing for their bodies, they want no words to make known their mind; but to a physician when they are sick, to a griping landlord when they are oppressed, to a wealthy friend when they are in want, they can lay open their case in sad complaints, and have words at will to press home their requests; yea, every beggar at their door can crave relief, and make it their daily practice; and hold on with importunity, and take no denial: necessity filleth their mouths with words, and teacheth them the most natural, prevailing rhetoric. These beggars will rise up in judgment against them, and condemn them. Doubtless, if they felt but the misery and necessities of their souls, they would be as forward to beg relief of God, and as frequent, as fervent, as

^a Some think that God looks only to their hearts, and the doctrine of justification by faith alone, and not by works, misunderstood, doth make them go on in wickedness, and think they believe, and then all is safe. To these men, Tertullian hath an excellent saying: "Sed aiunt quidam, satis Deum habere si corde et animo suspiciatur, licet actu minus fiat, itaque se salvo metu et fide peccare; hoc est, salva castitate, matrimonia violare; salva pietate, parenti venenum temperare; sic ergo et ipsi salva venia in gehennam detrudentur, dum salvo metu peccant. If they can sin, and yet believe, that is, violate matrimony, and keep chastity, &c., then they shall be thrust into hell, and yet be pardoned.—*Tertul. de Pœnitent.* c. 5.

importunate, and as constant, till they were past their straits ; but, alas ! he that only reads in a book that he is miserable, and what his soul stands in need of, but never felt himself miserable, nor felt particularly his several wants, no wonder if he must also fetch his prayer from his book only,^r or, at furthest, from the strength of his invention or memory. Solomon's request to God was, that what prayer or supplication soever should be made by any man, or by all the people, when every man shall know his own sore, and his own grief, and shall spread forth his hands before God, that God would then hear and forgive, &c. (2 Chron. vi. 29, 30.) If these men did thus know and feel every one the sore and the grief of his own soul, we should neither need so much to urge them to prayer, nor to teach them how to perform it, and what to say : whereas now they do invite God to be backward in giving, by their backwardness in asking, and to be weary of relieving them by their own being weary of begging, and to be seldom and short in his favours as they are in their prayers, and to give them but common and outward favours, as they put up but common and outside requests. Yea, their cold and heartless prayers do invite God to a flat denial : for among men it is taken for granted, that he who asks but slightly and seldom, cares not much for what he asks. Do not these men judge themselves unworthy of heaven, who think it not worth their more constant and earnest requests ? If it be not worth asking for, it is worth nothing ; and yet if one should go from house to house, through town and parish, and inquire at every house as you go, whether they do morning and evening call their family together, and earnestly and reverently seek the Lord in prayer, how few would you find that constantly and conscientiously practise this duty ? If every door were marked where they do not thus call upon the name of God, that his wrath might be poured out upon that family, our towns would be as places overthrown by the plague, the people being dead within, and the mark of judgment on the door without. I fear, where one house would escape, there are ten would be marked out for death ; and then they might teach their doors to pray, ' Lord, have mercy upon us ! ' because the people would not pray themselves. But especially if you could see what men do in their secret chambers, how few should you find in a whole

^r Concerning the lawfulness of forms and book-prayers, I make no doubt, but judge as Bishop Hall hath expressed himself piously and moderately in his '*Susurrium Solil.*' 73, called the '*Extremes of Devotion*,' p. 287.

town that spend one quarter of an hour, morning and night, in earnest supplication to God for their souls ! Oh ! how little do these men set by this eternal rest ! Thus do they slothfully neglect all endeavours for their own welfare, except some public duty in the congregations, which custom or credit doth engage them to. Persuade them to read good books, and they will not be at so much pains. Persuade them to learn the grounds of religion in some catechism, and they think it a toilsome slavery, fitter for schoolboys, or little children, than for them. Persuade them to sanctify the Lord's-day in holy exercise, and to spend it wholly in hearing the word, and repeating it with their families, and prayer and meditation, &c. ; and to forbear all their worldly thoughts and speeches ; and what a tedious life do they take this to be ! and how long may you preach to them before they will be brought to it, as if they thought that heaven were not worth all this ado ! Christ hath been pleading with England these fourscore years and more, by the word of his Gospel, for his worship and his sabbaths, and yet the inhabitants are not persuaded ; nay, he hath been pleading, these six years, by threatenings, and fire, and sword, and yet can prevail but with very few. And though these bloody arguments have been spread abroad, and brought home to people from parish to parish, almost as far as the word hath gone, so that there is scarce a parish in many counties where blood hath not been shed, and the bodies of the slain have not been left, yet multitudes in England are no more persuaded than they were the first day of their warning ; and they have not heard the voice of the rod, which hath cried up and down their streets : ' Yet, O England, will ye not sanctify my sabbaths, nor call upon my name, nor regard my word, nor turn from your worldliness and wickedness ! ' ^s God hath given them a lash and a reproof, a wound and warning ; he hath, as it were, stood in their blood, and with the sword in his hand, and among the heaps of the slain hath he pleaded with the living, and said, ' What say you ? Will you yet worship me, and fear me, and

^s How many of those twelve deplorable abuses, which are the pillars of Satan's kingdom, which (supposed) Cyprian mentioneth, are not common in England ? 1. A man of knowledge without works. 2. An old man without religious devotion. 3. A young man without obedience. 4. A rich man without alms. 5. A woman without chastity. 6. A gentleman without virtue. 7. A Christian contentious. 8. A beggar proud. 9. A bishop negligent. 10. A congregation without discipline. 11. A nation without law. 12. A king unjust. Read Jer. ix, 12—14 ; Lib. de xii. Abusib., vulgo, etsi non recte, Cypriano ascriptum.

take me for your Lord?' And yet they will not: alas! yet to this day, England will not! Let me here write it, and leave it upon record, that God may be justified, and England may be ashamed; and posterity may know, if God do spare us, how ill we deserved it; or, if he yet destroy us, how wilfully we procured it. And if they that pass by shall ask, 'Why has God done thus to a flourishing and prosperous land?' you may give them this true though doleful answer, 'They would not hear, they would not regard.' He smote them down, he wounded them, he hewed them as wood, and then he beseeched the remainder to consider and return, but they never would do it. They were weary of his ways; they polluted his sabbaths; they cast his word and worship out of their families; they would not be at the pains to learn and obey his will; nay, they abhorred his ministers, and servants, and holy paths, and all this to the last breath. When he had slain five thousand, or eight thousand at a fight, the rest did no more reform, than if they had never heard of it. Nay, such a spirit of slumber has fallen upon them, that if God should proceed, and kill them all save one man, and ask that one man, 'Wilt thou yet seek me with all thy heart?' he would rather slight it. Lord, have mercy upon us! What is done with men's understanding and sense? Have they renounced reason as well as faith? Are they dead naturally as well as spiritually? Can they not hear nor feel, though they cannot believe? That sad judgment is fallen upon them, mentioned in Isaiah, xlii. 24, 25, "Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel" (England) "to the robbers? Did not the Lord, he against whom we have sinned? For they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient to his laws. Therefore, he hath poured upon them the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle, and it hath set them on fire round about, yet they knew it not; it burnt them, yet they laid it not to heart." Yea, this much more let us leave upon record against England: they have been so far from reforming, and taking up the worship of God with delight, after all this, that multitudes have contrarily^t abhorred it at the very heart; and to root out the sincere worshippers, and worship of God, is their continued endeavour: and still, they that succeed them do the like. Lord,

^t *Pervicaces et obstinatos vocamus nos, non qui ab infirmitate carnis superati in peccatum aliquod prolapsi sunt; sed qui sibi placent in peccatis, in iisque toti voluntantur; quos non pudor, non metus, non objurgatio, non ipsæ denique Dei comminationes, ipsa Dei judicia possunt à peccando revocare.—Sadeel. in Psalm xxxii. p. 55. 2 Kings i. ; 2 Kings ii. 23, 24.*

how hast thou deserved so much ill at these men's hands ! What harm hath praying, and reading, and preaching painfully, and sanctifying the sabbath, and fearing to offend, done to England ? Have they suffered for these, or for their enmity to these ? What evil do these wretches discern in the everlasting kingdom, that they do not only refuse to labour for it, but do detest and resist the holy way that leads to it ? It is well for them that they live in Gospel times, when the patience of God doth wait on sinners ; and not in those severe days, when fire from heaven destroyed the captains and their companies, that were commanded by the king, to bring but one prophet before him ; or, when the lions destroyed forty-two children, for calling a prophet of God " bald-head : " or rather, it had been better for these men to have lived in those times, that though their temporal judgments had been greater, yet their eternal plagues might have been the less. Yet this much more let me leave upon record to the shame of many, that all this is not merely through idleness, because they will not be at the pains to serve God, but it is out of a bitter enmity to his word and ways ; for they will be at more pains than this in any way that is evil,^u or in any worship truly so called, of man's devising. They are as zealous for these, as if eternal life consisted in them : and where God forbids them, there they are as forward as if they could never do enough ; and where God commands them, they are as backward to it, yea, as much against it, as if they were the commands of the devil himself. The Lord grant that this hardened, wilful, malicious people, fall not under that heavy doom, " But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me." (Luke xix. 27.)

Sect. IV. The third sort that fall under this reproof,^x are

^u Deus non alienis assertionibus, sed suis æstimandus est vocibus.—*Ambros. de Pœnit.* lib. i. c. 4. Deus diserte docet, ea tantum in Deo colendo adhibenda esse quæ ipse præcepit. Summè displicet omnis ἐξελोधρησκεία et simulata religio, et cultus ex inventione humanâ profectus.—*Doct. Suttleive advers. Bellarm. de Monast.* c. 25. p. 130.

^x It is one thing to discourse of bread and of the table, and another thing to take and eat the sweetness of the bread, that all the members may be strengthened by it. It is one thing to dispute by words of the most pleasant drink, and another to go and take it from the fountain, and to be satisfied with its delightful taste. It is one thing to discourse of war, and of stout champions and warriors, and another for a man to go into the midst of the battle, and to join hands with the enemy, to charge through and through, to take and give, to go away with the victory. So it is also in spirituals. It is one thing to explain sayings with a certain knowledge and understanding, and it is an-

those self-cozening, formal, lazy professors of religion, who will be brought to any outward duty, and take up the easier part of Christianity, but to the inward work, and more difficult part, they will never be persuaded. They will preach, or hear, or read, or talk of heaven, or pray customarily and constantly in their families, and take part with the persons and causes that are good, and desire to be esteemed among the godly, but you can never bring them to the more spiritual and difficult duties, as to be constant and fervent in secret prayer, to be conscionable in the duty of self-examination, to be constant in that excellent duty of meditation, to be heavenly-minded, to watch constantly over his heart, words, and ways, to deny his bodily senses their delights, to mortify the flesh, and not make provision for it, to fulfil its lusts, to love and heartily forgive an enemy, to prefer his brethren heartily before himself, and to think meanly of his own gifts and worth, and to take it well of others that think so too, and to love them that have low thoughts of him, as well as those that have high, to bear easily the injuries, or undervaluing words of others against him, to lay all that he hath at the feet of Christ, and to prefer his service and favour before all; to prepare to die, and willingly to leave all, to come to Christ, &c. The outside hypocrites will never be persuaded to any of these. Above all other, two notable sorts there are of these hypocrites. First, The superficial, opinionative hypocrite. Secondly, The worldly hypocrite. First, The former entertaineth the doctrine of the Gospel with joy, (Matt. xiii. 29,) but it is only into the surface of his soul, he never gives the seed any depth of earth. He changeth his opinion, and he thereupon engageth for religion as the right way, and sides with it as a party in a faction, but it never melted and new-moulded his heart, nor set up Christ there in full power and authority; but as his religion lies most in his opinion, so he usually runs from opinion to opinion, and is carried up and down with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive; and as a child is tossed to and fro: (Eph. iv. 14 :) for as his religion is but opinion, so is his study, and conference, and chief business all about opinion. He is usually an ignorant, proud,^y bold, irreverent inquirer and babbler about contro-

other thing in substance, and indeed, and in certainty of faith, and in the mind, and in the inner man to possess the treasure, the grace, the taste, and the efficacy of the Holy Ghost.—*Blessed Macarius*, in Homil. 27. p. 367.

^y *Confidentia astra petimus, ruimus in præcipitia.*—*Alber. Gent. de Jur. Interpret.* lib. iv.

versies, rather than an humble embracer of the known truth, with love and subjection; you may conjecture by his bold and forward tongue, and groundless conceitedness in his own opinions, and slighting of the judgments and persons of others, and seldom talking of the great things of Christ with seriousness and humility, that his religion dwelleth in the brain, and not in his heart; where the wind of temptation assaults him, he easily yieldeth, and it carrieth him away as a feather, because his heart is empty, and not balanced and established with Christ and grace. If the temptation of the times do assault men's understandings, and the sign be in the head, though the little religion that he hath lies there, yet a hundred to one but he turneth heretic, or catcheth the vertigo of some lesser errors, according to the nature and strength of the seducement. If the wind do better serve for a vicious conversation, a hundred to one but he turns a purveyor for the flesh, and then he can be a tippler, and yet religious, a gamester, a wanton, a neglecter of duties, and yet religious. If this man's judgment lead him in the ceremonious way,^z then doth he employ his chiefest zeal for ceremonies, as if his religion lay in them. If his judgment be against ceremonies,^a then his strongest zeal is employed against them, studying, talking, disputing against them, censuring the users of them, and perhaps fall into a contrary extreme, placing his chief religion in anabaptism, church combinations, and forms of polity, &c. For not having his soul taken up with the essentials of Christianity, he hath only the mint and cummin, the smaller matters of the law, to lay out his zeal upon. You shall never hear in private conference any humble and hearty bewailings of his soul's imperfections, or any heart-bleeding acknowledgments of his unkindnesses to Christ, of any pantings

^z Siquis volet facere voluntatem Dei cognoscet de voluntate; at cultus electitius non est voluntas Dei. Et timoris Dei fructus est, non cultum aliquem eligere quem Deo deferas, sed à Dei potius oraculis haurire quem ipsi tribuas: juxta illud prophetæ. Isai. l. 10, &c. Dr. Twisse 'Contr. Corvinum,' p. 307. a. Cruces etiam nec colimus nec optamus. Vos plane qui ligneos Deos consecratis, cruces ligneas ut Deorum vestrorum partes fortasse adornatis; nam et signa ipsa et cantebra, et vexilla castrorum, quid aliud quam inauratæ cruces sunt, et ornatæ?—*Minut. Felix Octav.* p. (ut Arnob. edit. per Elmenhorst.) 389; where read further what he saith of the cross.

^a Facile persuadeas senem ut sellam deserat, si baculum prius quo niti possit, in manum dederis; qui te alioquin nunquam auditorus est, sed insidiatorem potius judicaturus, ut qui cupias pronum ad silicem cranium frangere. Sic mentes humanæ ante omnia sunt ad infallibilem Dei cognitionem adducendæ, quam ubi attigerint, jam facile demittent fallacia, &c.—*Zuingli, de Vera et Falsa Relig.* p. 406.

and longings after him, from this man, but that he is of such a judgment, or such a religion, or party, or society, or a member of such a church. Hence doth he gather his greatest comforts; but the inward and spiritual labours of a Christian, he will not be brought to.

Secondly: The like may be said of the 'worldly hypocrite, who choketh the doctrine of the Gospel with the thorns of worldly cares and desires.^b His judgment is convinced that he must be religious, or he cannot be saved; and therefore he reads, and hears, and prays, and forsakes his former company and courses; but because his belief of the gospel doctrine is but wavering and shallow, he resolves to keep his hold of present things, lest the promise of rest should fail him; and yet to be religious, that so he may have heaven, when he can keep the world no longer, thinking it wisdom to have two strings to his bow, lest one should break. 'This man's judgment may say, 'God is the chief Good,' but his heart and affections never said so, but look upon God as a kind of strange and disproportionate happiness, to be tolerated rather than the flames of hell, but not desired before the felicity on earth. In a word, the world hath more of his affections than God, and therefore is his god, and his covetousness idolatry. This he might easily know and feel if he would judge impartially, and were but faithful to himself. And though this man do not gad after opinions and novelties in his religion, as the former, yet will he set his sails to the wind of worldly advantage, and be of that opinion which will best serve his turn. And as a man whose spirits are seized on by some pestilential malignity, is feeble and faint and heartless in all that he does; so this man's spirits being possessed by the plague of this malignant worldly disposition, oh, how faint is he in secret prayer! oh, how superficial in examination and meditation! how feeble in heart-watchings, and humbling, mortifying endeavours! how nothing at all in loving and walking with God, rejoicing in him, or desiring after him! So that both these, and many other sorts of lazy^c hypocrites there are, who,

^b Qui innocentiam colit, Domino supplicat; qui justitiam, Deo libat; qui fraudibus abstinet, propitiat Deum; qui hominem periculo surripit, opimam victimam cedit. Hæc nostra sacrificia, hæc Deo sacra sunt: sic apud nos religiosior est ille qui justior.—*Minut. Felix Octav.* p. (mibi) 392.

^c Est autem tepiditas, parvus amor boni, amore Dei postposito; et est prima radix accidiæ, vel convertibilis cum eadem. Ex ista autem nascuntur species aliæ consequentes, ut creatura peccabilis inordinate afficitur creaturæ. Sic accidus quiescit in amore indebito creaturæ. Unde talis tepiditas cum

though they will trudge on with you in the easy outside of religion, yet will never be at the pains of inward and spiritual duties.

Sect. V. 4. And even the godly themselves deserve this reproof, for being too lazy seekers of their everlasting rest. Alas ! what a disproportion is there betwixt our light and our heat ; our professions and prosecution ! Who makes that haste, as if it were for heaven ? How still we stand ! How idly we work ! How we talk, and jest, and trifle away our time ! How deceitfully we do the work of God ! How we hear, as if we heard not ; and pray as if we prayed not ; and confer, and examine, and meditate, and reprove sin, as if we did it not ; and use the ordinances, as if we used them not ; and enjoy Christ, as if we enjoyed him not : as if we had learned to use the things of heaven as the apostle teacheth us to use the world ! (1 Cor. vii. 29—31.) Who would think, that stood by us and heard us pray in private or public, that we were praying for no less than everlasting glory ? Should heaven be sought no more earnestly than thus ? Methinks we are none of us all in good sadness for our souls. We do but dally with the work of God, and play with Christ ; as children, we play with our meat when we should eat it, and we play with our clothes, and look upon them, when we should put them on, and wear them ; we hang upon ordinances from day to day,^d but we stir not ourselves to seek the Lord. I see a great many very constant in hearing and praying, and give us some hopes that their hearts are honest, but they do not hear and pray as if it were for their lives. Oh, what a frozen stupidity hath benumbed us ! The judgment of Pharaoh is amongst us ; we are turned into stones and rocks, that can neither feel nor stir. The plague of Lot's wife is upon us, as if we were changed into lifeless and immoveable pillars : we are dying, and we know it, and yet we stir not ; we are at the door of eternal happiness or misery, and yet we perceive it not ; death knocks, and we hear it not ; Christ calls and knocks, and we hear not : God cries to us, "To-day if you will hear my voice, harden not your hearts. Work while it is day, for the night cometh when none shall work." Now ply your business,

sit, propinquo hypocrisi vomitum provocat spiritualem. Sicut enim sunt exhalationes calidæ commixtæ cum frigido aqueo in aqua tepida quæ provocant ad vomitum ; sic sunt in hypocrisi quædam operationes bonæ de genere, commixta cum peccato hypocrisis. Omnis ergo accidus peccat in hypocrisi cum false simulat sanctitatem. Et ista tepiditate inficitur totus mundus.—*Wickliffe Trialog.* lib. iii. c. 16. fol. 70.

^d Read Mr. Whitfield's excellent sermon on this.

now labour for your lives, now lay out all your strength and time, now do it, now or never; and yet we stir no more than if we were half asleep. What haste doth death and judgment make! How fast do they come on! They are almost at us, and yet what little haste make we! What haste makes the sword to devour, from one part of the land to another! What haste doth plague and famine make! and all because we will not make haste. The spur of God is in our side; we bleed, we groan, and yet we do not mend our pace: the rod is on our backs, it speaks to the quick: our lashes are heard through the christian world, and yet we stir no faster than before. Lord, what a senseless, sottish, earthly, hellish thing is a hard heart! That we will not go roundly and cheerfully toward heaven without all this ado; no, nor with it neither. Where is the man that is serious in his Christianity? Methinks men do everywhere make but a trifle of their eternal state. They look after it but a little upon the by; they do not make it the task and business of their lives. To be plain with you, I think nothing undoes men so much as complimenting and jesting in religion. Oh, if I were not sick myself of the same disease, with what tears should I mix this ink; and with what groans should I express these sad complaints; and with what heart's grief should I mourn over this universal deadness! Do the magistrates among us seriously perform their portion of the work?^e

^e It is a frivolous dream to think that a judge or lawyer hath one conscience as a judge, and another as a Christian; for he hath but one soul, &c. And how can that seem just according to law, which appeareth to a man's conscience to be unjust?—*Fulbeck's Direction*, p. 33. Rara virtus est inter principes, non timori esse recte factis: h. e. non obistere veritati, et his quæ se ad evangelii veritatem et normam componunt non odiosius imminere; et contra familiare est principibus quibusdam, pessimos quosque dignitatibus, honoribusque admovere, non aliâ causâ quam ut immanissime tractent veridicos.—*Zuing. de Ver. et Fals. Relig. de Scandalo*, p. 392. O beatum populum in quo uno ore et uno animo utraque administratio (ecclesiastica et civilis) ad sanctam communionem cum civili societate continuandam et augendam conspiraverit. Non minuit illam hæc administratio. Sed altera alteram stantem confirmat, labantem statuminat, collapsam erigit. Si homines quibus commissa est, cogitabunt serio, et volunt in Sparta sua quam nacti fuerint colenda incumbere. Quo magis admiror audaciam eorum hominum qui de duabus istis administrationibus perinde judicant, ac si ἄσπονδοι inter se essent infestissimæ et prorsus ἀσπίτατοι; et de hac sententia sua tam pertinaciter contendunt quam si (quod absit) alteram ab altera eversam cuperunt, &c.—*Junius, Eccles.* c. 5. Oper. tom. 1. p. 1975. Exeat aula, qui vult esse pius; virtus et summa potestas, non coeunt.—*Lucan.* lib. viii. A sad saying. See the 'Life of Cronenburg' in vitis German. Medicor. per Melch. Adam. Inter leges ipsas delinquitur, inter jura peccatur. Innocentia nec illic ubi defenditur, reservatur. Sævitur invicem discordantium rabies, et inter togas pace rupta forum litibus

Are they zealous for God ; do they build up his house ; and are they tender of his honour ; do they second the word ; and encourage the godly ; and relieve the oppressed ; and compassionate the distressed ; and let fly at the face of sin and sinners, as being the disturbers of our peace, and the only cause of all our miseries ? Do they study how to do the utmost that they can for God ; to improve their power, and parts, and wealth, and honour, and all their interests, for the greatest advantage to the kingdom of Christ, as men that must shortly give an account of their stewardship ? Or do they build their own houses, and seek their advancements, and stand upon, and contest for, their own honours ; and do no more for Christ than needs they must, or than lies in their way, or than is put by others into their hands, or than stands with the pleasing of their friends, or with their worldly interest ? Which of these two courses do they take ? And how thin are those ministers that are serious in their work ! Nay, how mightily do the very best fail in this above all things ! Do we cry out of men's disobedience to the Gospel,^f in the evidence and power of the Spirit, and deal with sin as that which is the fire in our towns and houses, and by force pull men out of this fire ? Do we persuade our people, as those that know the terrors of the Lord should do ? Do we press Christ, and regeneration, and faith, and holiness, as men that believe indeed that without these they shall never have life ?^g Do our bowels yearn over the ignorant, and the careless, and the obstinate multitude, and men that believe their own doctrine ? That our dear people must be eternally damned, if they be not timely recovered ? When we look them in the faces, do our hearts melt over them, lest we should never see their faces in rest ? Do we, as Paul, tell them, weeping, of their fleshly and earthly disposition ; (Phil. iii. 18, 19 ;) and teach them publicly,^h and from house to house, night and day with tears ;

mugit insanum, &c. Quis inter hæc subveniet ? Patronus ? Sed prævaricatur et decipit iudex ? Sed sententiam vendit. Qui sedet crimina vindicaturus, admittit ? Et ut reus innocens pereat, fit nocens iudex.—*Cypr. Epist. l. ad Donatum.*

^f Isa. lviii. 1. Jude, ver. 23. 2 Cor. v. 11.

^g Matt. ix. 36. Negligentes non sunt negligendi.—*Just. Martyr. ad Zenam.*

^h Longe graviori debito tenentur, astricti, qui pro multis animabus redituri sunt rationem. Quid ego infelix, quo me vertam, si tantum thesaurum, si pretiosum depositum illud quod sibi Christus sanguine suo pretiosius iudicavit, contigerit negligentius custodire ? Si stillantem de cruce Domini sanguinem collegissem, essetque repositus penes me, in vase vitreo, quod et portari sæpius oporteret, quid animi habiturus essem in discrimine tanto ? Et certè

(Acts x. 20, 21 ;) and do we entreat them, as if it were indeed for their lives and salvation ; that when we speak of the joys and miseries of another world, our people may see us affected accordingly, and perceive that we do indeed mean as we speak ? Or rather do we not study words, and neat expressions, that we may approve ourselves able men in the judgment of critical hearers ; and speak so formally and heartlessly of eternity, that our people can scarcely think that we believe ourselves ; or put our tongues into some affected pace, and our language into some forced oratorical strain, as if a minister's business were of no more weight, but to tell them a smooth tale of an hour long, and so look no more after them till the next sermon ? Seldom do we fit our sermons, either for matter or manner, to the great end, our people's salvation ; but we sacrifice our studies to our own credit, or our people's content, or some such base, inferior end. Carnal discretion doth control our fervency ; it maketh our sermons like beautiful pictures, which have much pains and cost bestowed upon them to make them comely and desirable to the eye ; but life, or heat, or motion, there is none. Surely, as such a conversation is an hypocritical conversation, so such a sermon is as truly an hypocritical sermon. Oh, the formal, frozen, lifeless sermons which we daily hear preached upon the most weighty, piercing subjects in the world ! How gently do we handle those sins which will handle so cruelly our people's souls ; and how tenderly do we deal with their careless hearts, not speaking to them as to men that must be

id servandum accepi pro quo mercator non insipiens, ipsa utique sapientia, sanguinem suum dedit. Accedit sane ad solitudinis cumulum quod cum meam et proximi conscientiam servare necesse sit, neutra mihi satis est nota ; utraque abyssus, utraque mihi nox est, at exigitur à me custodia utriusque. — *Bern. Serm. 3. de Tempore.* I cannot better express my mind to my brethren than in Seneca's words : Non jejuna esse et arida volo, quæ de rebus tam magnis dicentur. Neque enim philos. (theologia) ingenio renunciat. Multum tamen operæ impendi verbis non oportet. Hæc sit propositi nostri summa ; quod sentimus loquamur, quod loquimur sentiamus. Concordet sermo cum vita, ille promissum suum implevit, qui et cum videas illum, et cum audias, idem est. Videbinus qualis sit, quantus : unus sit. Non delectent verba nostra, sed prosint, &c. Non quærit æger medicum eloquentem, sed sanantem. Sed si ita competit, ut idem ille qui sanare potest, compte de his quæ facienda sunt disserat, boni consulet ; non tamen erit quare gratuletur sibi quod inciderit in medicum etiam desertum. Hoc enim tale est, quale si peritus gubernator etiam formosus est. Quid aures meas scalpis ? Quid oblectas ? Aliud agitur ; urendus, secandus, abstinendus sum. Ad hæc adhibitus es ; curare debes morbum veterem, gravem, publicum. Tantum negotii habes quantum in pestilentia medicus. Circa verba occupatus es ? — *Seneca Epist. 75.* Vide reliqua.

wakened or damned ! We tell them of heaven and hell in such a sleepy tone, and flighty way, as if we were but acting a part in a play ; so that we usually preach our people asleep with those subjects, which one would think should rather endanger the driving of some beside themselves, if they were faithfully delivered. Not that I commend or excuse that real indiscretion, and unseemly language, and nauseous repetitions, and ridiculous gestures, whereby many do disgrace the word of God, and bring his ordinances into contempt with the people ; nor think it fit that he should be an ambassador from God on so weighty a business, that is not able to speak sense or reason. But, in a word, our want of seriousness about the things of heaven, doth charm the souls of men into formality, and hath brought them to this customary careless hearing, which undoes them. The Lord pardon the great sin of the ministry in this thing, and, in particular, my own !

And are the people any more serious than magistrates and ministers ? How can it be expected ? Reader, look but to thyself, and resolve the question. Ask conscience, and suffer it to tell thee truly. Hast thou set thine eternal rest before thine eyes, as the great business which thou hast to do in this world ? Hast thou studied and cared, watched and laboured, and laid about thee with all thy might, lest any should take thy crown from thee ?ⁱ Hast thou made haste, lest thou shouldst come too late, and die before the work be done ? Hath thy heart been set upon it, and thy desires and thoughts run out this way ? Hast thou pressed on through crowds of opposition towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, still reaching forth unto those things which are before ? (Mark vi. 21 ; Phil. iii. 13, 14 ; Eccles. ix. 10.) When you have set your hand to the work of God, have you done it with all your might ? Can conscience witness your secret cries, and groans, and tears ? Can your families witness that you have taught them the fear of the Lord, and warned them all with earnestness and unweariedness to remember God and their souls, and to provide for everlasting life ? Or that you have done but as much for them, as that damned glutton would have had Lazarus do for his brethren on earth, to warn them that

ⁱ Nam et hoc nobis ut non olim per *visionem* probatum sciatis, quod dormitemus in precibus, nec vigilanter oremus excutiamus itaque et abrumpamus somni vincula, et iustanter et vigilanter, oremus. Col. iv. 2. ; Luke vi. 12.—*Cyprian. Epist.* 8, p. 23.

they come not to that place of torment? Can your ministers witness that they have heard you cry out, 'What shall we do to be saved?' And that you have followed them with complaints against your corruptions, and with earnest inquiries after the Lord? Can your neighbours about you witness, that you are still learning of them that are able to instruct you? And that you plainly and roundly reprove the ungodly, and take pains for the saving of your brethren's souls? Let all these witnesses judge this day between God and you, whether you are in good earnest about the affairs of eternal rest. But if yet you cannot discern your neglects; look but to yourselves, within you, without you, to the work you have done: you can tell by his work, whether your servant hath loitered, though you did not see him; so you may by yourselves: is your love to Christ, your faith, your zeal, and other graces, strong or weak? What are your joys; what is your assurance? Is all right and strong, and in order within you? Are you ready to die, if this should be the day? Do the souls among whom you have conversed, bless you? Why, judge by this, and it will quickly appear whether you have been labourers or loiterers.

O blessed rest; how unworthily art thou neglected! O glorious kingdom; how art thou undervalued! Little know the careless sons of men, what a state they set so light by! If they once knew it, they would surely be of another mind.

CHAP. VI.

An Exhortation to Seriousness in seeking Rest.

I HOPE, reader, by this time thou art somewhat sensible, what a desperate thing it is to trifle about our eternal rest; and how deeply thou hast been guilty of this thyself. And I hope, also, that thou darest not now suffer this conviction to die; but art resolved to be another man for the time to come: what sayst thou, is this thy resolution? If thou wert sick of some desperate disease, and the physician should tell thee, 'If you will observe but one thing, I doubt not to cure you,' wouldst thou not observe it? Why, if thou wilt observe but this one thing for thy soul, I make no doubt of thy salvation; if thou wilt now but shake off thy sloth, and put to all thy strength, and ply the

work of God unweariedly, and be a downright Christian ; I know not what can hinder thy happiness. As far as thou art gone from God, if thou wouldst but now return and seek him with all thy heart, no doubt but thou shalt find him. As unkindly as thou hast dealt with Jesus Christ, if thou didst but feel thyself sick and dead, and seek him heartily, and apply thyself in good earnest to the obedience of his laws, thy salvation were as sure as if thou hadst it already ; but as full as the satisfaction of Christ is, as free as the promise is, as large as the mercy of God is, yet if thou do but look on these, and talk of them, when thou shouldst greedily entertain them, thou wilt be never the better for them ; and if thou loiter when thou shouldst labour, thou wilt lose the crown.^k Oh, fall to work then speedily and seriously, and bless God that thou hast yet time to do it ; and though that which is past cannot be recalled, yet redeem the time now by doubling thy diligence. And because thou shalt see I urge thee not without cause, I will here adjoin a multitude of considerations to move thee ; yet do I not here desire thee to take them by number, but by weight ; their intent and use is, to drive thee from delaying, and from loitering in seeking rest : and to all men do I propound them, both godly and ungodly ; whoever thou art, therefore, I entreat thee to rouse up thy spirit, and read them deliberately, and give me a little while thy attention, as to a message from God ; and as Moses said to the people, "Set thy heart to all the words that I testify to thee this day ; for it is not a vain thing, but it is for thy life." (Deut. xxxii. 46.) Weigh what I here write with the judgment of a man ; and if I speak not reason, throw it back in my face ; but if I do, see thou entertain and obey it accordingly ; and the Lord open thy heart, and fasten his counsel effectually upon thee.

Sect. II. 1. Consider, Our affections and actions should be somewhat answerable to the greatness of the ends to which they are intended.¹ Now the ends of a Christian's desires and

^k Oh, how then should every one of us believe and strive, and lay out our utmost pains in all godly conversation, and hold on in much hope, and suffering, and patience : that at least we may be worthy or meet to obtain that heavenly virtue and glory of the Holy Ghost in the inward soul, that so when these bodies are dissolved, we may have that which may cover and quicken us !—*Macarius, Homil. 5.*

¹ In quo quemque invenerit suus novissimus dies in hoc eum comprehendet mundi novissimus dies. Quoniam qualis in die isto quisque moritur, talis in die illo judicabitur.—*Aug. Epist. 80. tom. 1.* Qualis exieris ex hac vita, talis redderis illa vita.—*Aug. in Psal. xxxvi, referente. Jac. Laurentio in Jacob, v. 8. Ubi hic purgatorium ?*

endeavours are so great, that no human understanding on earth can comprehend them; whether you respect their proper excellency, their exceeding importance, or their absolute necessity.

These ends are, the glorifying of God, the salvation of our own and other men's souls, in our escaping the torments of hell, and possessing the glory of heaven. And can a man be too much affected with things of such moment? Can he desire them too earnestly, or love them too violently, or labour for them too diligently? When we know that if our prayers prevail not, and our labour succeeds not, we are undone for ever, I think it concerns us to seek and labour to the purpose. When it is put to the question, Whether we shall live for ever in heaven or in hell?^m and the question must be resolved upon our obeying the Gospel, or our disobeying it, upon the painfulness or the slothfulness of our present endeavours; I think it is time for us to bestir ourselves, and to leave our trifling and complimenting with God.

Sect. III. 2. Consider, Our diligence should be somewhat answerable to the greatness of the work which we have to do, as well as to the ends of it.ⁿ Now the works of a Christian here, are very many, and very great: the soul must be renewed; many and great corruptions must be mortified; custom, and temptations, and worldly interests, must be conquered; flesh must be mastered; self must be denied; life, and friends, and credit, and all must be slighted; conscience must be upon good grounds quieted; assurance of pardon and salvation must be attained. And though it is God that must give us these, and that freely, without our own merit; yet will he not give them so freely, as without our earnest seeking and labour. Besides, there is a deal of knowledge to be got,^e for the guiding ourselves, for the defending of the truth, for the direction of others, and a deal of skill for the right managing of our parts: many ordinances are to be used, and duties performed, ordinary and extraordinary; every age, and year, and day, doth require fresh

^m Si quis diligenter perpendat quæ et qualis sit causa propter quam pugnandum est, is certe intelliget, minime dormiendum esse; sed sedulò, cordate, fortiter pugnandum. De summa rerum agitur. Pro aris et focus; pro gloria Dei Patris nostri tuenda; et pro salute nostra æterna defendenda.—*Zunch.* tom. 3. lib. ïv. c. 21. p. 214.

ⁿ Non cum vacaveris, philosophandum est: omnia alia negligenda, ut huic assideamus, cui nullum tempus satis magnum est; etiamsi à pueritia usque ad longissimos humani ævi terminos, vita protenditur. Non multum refert utrum omittas, an intermittas. Resistendum est occupationibus, nec explicandæ, sed submovendæ sunt.—*Senec. Epist. 72.*

succession of duty ; every place we come in, every person that we have to deal with, every change of our condition, doth still require the renewing of our labour, and bringeth duty along with it ; wives, children, servants, neighbours, friends, enemies, all of them call for duty from us ; and all this of great importance too ; so that for the most of it, if we miscarry in it, it would prove our undoing.

Judge, then, yourselves, whether men that have so much business lying upon their hands, should not bestir them ; and whether it be their wisdom either to delay, or to loiter ?

Sect. IV. 3. Consider, Our diligence should be somewhat quickened, because of the shortness and uncertainty of the time allotted us for the performing of all this work, and the many and great impediments which we meet with. Yet a few days, and we shall be here no more. Time passeth on : many hundred diseases are ready to assault us : we that now are preaching, and hearing, and talking, and walking, must very shortly be carried on men's shoulders, and laid in the dust, and there left to the worms in darkness and corruption ; we are almost there already ; it is but a few days, or months, or years, and what is that when once they are past ? We know not whether we shall have another sermon, or sabbath, or hour. How then should those men bestir them for their everlasting rest, who know they have so short a space for so great a work ! Besides, every step in the way hath its difficulties ; the gate is strait, and the way narrow ; the righteous themselves are scarcely saved ; scandals and discouragements will be still cast before us : and can all these be overcome by slothful endeavours ?

Sect. V. 4. Moreover, our diligence should be somewhat answerable to the diligence of our enemies in seeking our destruction.^o For if we sit still while they are plotting and labouring ; or if we be lazy in our defence, while they are diligent in assaulting us ; you may easily conceive how we are likely to speed. How diligent is Satan in all kinds of temptations ! therefore, " Be sober and vigilant, because your adversary the devil as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour ; whom resist steadfast in the faith." (1 Pet. v. 8.) How diligent

^o If our enemy never cease assaulting, certainly we must never cease defending. What sottishness and madness then possesseth men, that will carelessly pass the time in feasting and drunkenness, as if they had made a truce with the devil ! Brethren, is it present fighting or sleeping that be- seems us ?—*Zanch.* tom. 3. lib. iv. c. 21. p. 214.

are the ministers of Satan ; false teachers, scorers at godliness, malicious persecutors, all unwearied ; and our inward corruption the most busy and diligent of all ; whatever we are about, it is still resisting us ; depraving our duties, perverting our thoughts, dulling our affections to good, exciting them to evil ; and will a feeble resistance then serve our turn ? Should not we be more active for our own preservation, than our enemies for our ruin ?

Sect. VI. 5. Our affections and endeavours should bear some proportion to the talents which we have received, and means which we have enjoyed.^p It may well be expected that a horseman shall go faster than a footman ; and he that hath a swift horse, faster than he that hath a slow one : more work will be expected from a sound man, than from the sick ; and from a man at age, than from a child : and to whom men commit much, from them they will expect the more. (Luke xii. 48.) Now the talents which we have received are many and great : the means which we have enjoyed are very much, and very precious. What people breathing on earth, have had plainer instructions, or more forcible persuasions, or constant admonitions, in season and out of season : sermons, till we have been weary of them ; and sabbaths, till we profaned them : excellent books in such plenty, that we knew not which to read ; but loathing them through abundance, have thrown by all. What people have had God so near them, as we have had ; or have seen Christ, as it were, crucified before their eyes, as we have done ? What people have had heaven and hell, as it were, opened unto them, as we ? scarcely a day wherein we have not had some spur to put us on. What speed then should such a people make for heaven ; and how should they fly that are thus winged : and how swiftly should they sail that have wind and tide to help them ! Believe it, brethren, God looks for more from England, than from most nations in the world ; and for more from you that enjoy these helps, than from the dark, untaught congregations of the land. A small measure of grace beseems not such a people ; nor will an ordinary diligence in the work of God excuse them.

Sect. VII. 6. The vigour of our affections and actions should

^p Fides Scripturæ et vivax ratio dictant nobis, quod subducto otio debemus continue servire Deo ; nam sicut avis nascitur ad volatum, sic homo ad laborem ; et si beati angeli damnarentur etsi servirent continue et debite Deo suo ; quod privilegium excusaret nos miseros, si subtrahamus servitium Dei nostri, cum terrenus Dominus instar Dei punit acute pro subtractione sui servitii ?

—*Wickliff. Triolog.* lib. iii. c. 16. fol. 71.

be somewhat answerable to the great cost bestowed upon us, and to the deep engaging mercies which we have received from God. Surely, we owe more service to our master from whom we have our maintenance, than we do to a stranger to whom we were never beholden. Oh, the cost that God hath been at for our sakes ; the riches of sea and land, of heaven and earth, hath he poured out upon us ! All our lives have been filled up with mercies : we cannot look back upon one hour of it, or one passage in it, but we may behold mercy. We feed upon mercy, we wear mercy on our backs, we tread upon mercy ; mercy within us, common and special ; mercy without us, for this life, and for that to come ; oh, the rare deliverances that we have partaken of, both national and personal ! How oft, how seasonably, how fully have our prayers been heard, and our fears removed ; what large catalogues of particular mercies can every Christian draw forth and rehearse ! To offer to number them, would be an endless task, as to number the stars, or the sands of the shore. If there be any difference betwixt hell, where we should have been, and earth, where we now are, yea, or heaven, which is offered us, then certainly we have received mercy. Yea, if the blood of the Son of God be mercy, then are we engaged to God by mercy ; for so much did it cost him to recover us to himself. And should a people of such deep engagements be lazy in their returns : shall God think nothing too much nor too good for us ; and shall we think all too much that we do for him ? Thou that art an observing, sensible man, who knowest how much thou art beholden to God ; I appeal to thee, is not a loitering performance of a few heartless duties, an unworthy requital of such admirable kindness ? For my own part, when I compare my slow and unprofitable life, with the frequent and wonderful mercies received, it shames me, it silenceth me, and leaves me inexcusable.

SECT. VIII. 7. Again, consider, All the relations which we stand in toward God, whether common or special, do call upon us for our utmost diligence. Should not the pot be wholly at the service of the potter, and the creature at the service of his great Creator : are we his children, and do we not owe him our most tender affections, and dutiful obedience : are we the spouse of Christ, and do we not owe him our observance, and our love ? “ If he be our Father, where is his honour ; and if he be our Master, where is his fear ? ” (Mal. i. 6.) “ We call him Lord and Master, and we do well ; ” (John xiii. 13 ;) but if our in-

dustury be not answerable to our assumed relations, we condemn ourselves, in saying we are his children, or his servants. How will the hard labour and daily toil that servants undergo to please their masters, judge and condemn those men who will not labour so hard for their great Master! Surely, there is none have a better or more honourable master than we, nor can any expect such fruit of their labours. (1 Cor. xv. *ult.*)

Sect. IX. 8. Consider, What haste should they make who have such rods at their backs, as be at ours; and how painfully should they work, who are still driven on by such sharp afflictions: if either we wander out of the way, or loiter in it, how surely do we prepare for our own smart! Every creature is ready to be God's rod to reduce us, or to put us on: our sweetest mercies will become our sorrows: or, rather than he will want a rod, the Lord will make us a scourge to ourselves: our diseased bodies shall make us groan; our perplexed minds shall make us restless; our conscience shall be as a scorpion in our bosom. And is it not easier to endure the labour than the spur: had we rather be still thus afflicted, than to be up and going? Alas! how like are we to tired horses, that will lie down and groan, or stand still, and let you lay on them as long as you will, rather than they will freely travel on their journey! And thus we make our own lives miserable, and necessitate God, if he love us, to chastise us. It is true, those who do most, do meet with afflictions also: but surely, according to the measure of their peace of conscience, and faithfulness to Christ, so is the bitterness of their cup, for the most part, abated.

Sect. X. 9. How close should they ply their work, who have such great preparations attending them as we have! All the world are our servants, that we may be the servants of God. The sun, and moon, and stars, attend us with their light and influence; the earth, with all its furniture, is at our service. How many thousand plants, and flowers, and fruits, and birds, and beasts, do all attend us! The sea, with its inhabitants; the air, the wind, the frost and snow, the heat and fire, the clouds and rain, all wait upon us while we do our work; yea, the angels are ministering spirits for the service of the elect: and is it not an intolerable crime for us to trifle, while all these are employed to assist us? Nay more, the patience and goodness of God do wait upon us; the Lord Jesus waiteth in the offers of his blood; the Holy Ghost waiteth in striving with our backward hearts; besides, all his servants, the ministers of his Gospel, who study

and wait, and preach and wait, and pray and wait, upon careless sinners : and shall angels and men, yea, the Lord himself, stand by and look on ; and, as it were, hold the candle while thou dost nothing ? O Christians, I beseech you, whenever you are upon your knees in prayer, or reproving the transgressors, or exhorting the obstinate, or upon any duty, do but remember what attendants you have for this work ; and then judge how it behoves you to perform it.

Sect. XI. 10. Should not our affections and endeavours be answerable to the acknowledged principles of our christian profession ? Sure, if we are Christians indeed, and mean as we speak, when we profess the faith of Christ, we shall show it in affections and actions, as well as expressions. Why, the very fundamental doctrines of our religion are : That God is the chief Good, and all our happiness consists in his love ; and therefore, it should be valued and sought above all things : that he is our Lord, and therefore, chiefly to be served ; that we must love him with all our heart, and soul, and strength ; that the very business that men have in the world, and the only errand that God sent them about, is to glorify God, and to obtain salvation, &c. And do men's duties and conversation second this profession ? Are these doctrines seen in the painfulness of men's practice ; or rather, do not their works deny what their words do confess ? One would think, by men's actions, that they did not believe a word of the Gospel to be true. Oh, sad day, when men's own tongues and professions shall be brought in against them ; and condemn them !

Sect. XII. 11. How forward and painful should we be in that work, where we are sure we can never do enough ! If there were any danger in over-doing, then it might well cause men to moderate their endeavours ; but we know, that if we could do all, we were but unprofitable servants ; (Luke xvii. 10 ;) much more when we are sure to fail in all. It is true, a man may possibly pray too much, or preach too much, or hear or reprove too much, though I have known few that ever did so ; but yet no man can obey or serve God too much : for one duty may be said to be too long, when it shuts out another, and then it ceaseth, indeed, to be a duty.^a So that, though all superstition, or worship of our devising, maybe called righteousness overmuch ; yet, as long as you keep your service to the rule of the word,

^a Voluptas nocet nimia, in virtute non est verendum ne quid nimium sit, quia in ipsa est modus.—*Senec. de Vit. Beat. c. 13.*

that so it might have the true nature of obedience, you never need to fear being righteous too much ; for else, we should reproach the Lord and Lawgiver of the church, as if he commanded us to do too much. Ah, if the world were not mad with malice, they could never be so blind in this point as they are : to think, that faithful diligence in serving Christ, is folly and singularity ; and that they who set themselves wholly to seek eternal life, are but precise puritans ! The time is near, when they will easily confess that God could not be loved or served too much, and that no man can be too busy to save his soul : for the world, you may easily do too much, but here, in God's way, you cannot.

Sect. XIII. 12. It is the nature of every grace to put on the soul to diligence and speed. If you loved God, you would make haste, and not delay or trifle ; you would think nothing too much that you could possibly do ; you would be ambitious to serve him, and please him still more : love is quick and impatient, it is active and observant. If you loved Christ, you would keep his commandments, and not accuse them of too much strictness. (John i. 4, xv. 23.) So also, if you had faith, it would quicken and encourage you ; if you had the hope of glory, it would, as the spring in the watch, set all the wheels of your souls a going ; if you had the fear of God, it would rouse you out of your slothfulness ; if you had zeal, it would inflame you, and eat you up. God hath put all his graces in the soul, on purpose to be oil to the wheels, to be life to the dead, to mind men of their duty, and dispose them to it, and to carry them to himself ; so that, in what degree soever thou art sanctified, in the same degree thou wilt be serious and laborious in the work of God.

Sect. XIV. 13. Consider, They that trifle in the way to heaven, do but lose all their labour, when serious endeavours do obtain their end. The proverb is, "As good never a whit, as never the better." If two be running a race, he that runs slowest had as good never run at all ; for, now, he loseth the prize and his labour both. (Acts xxvi. 28.) Many, who like Agrippa, are but almost Christians, will find, in the end, they shall be but almost saved. God hath set the rate at which the pearl must be bought ; if you bid a penny less than that rate, you had as good bid nothing. As a man that is lifting at some weighty thing, if he put to almost strength enough, but yet not sufficient, it is as good he put to none at all ; for he doth but

ose all his labour. Oh, how many professors of Christianity will find this true, to their sorrow, who have had a mind to the ways of God, and have kept up a dull task of duty, and plodded on in a formal, lifeless profession, but never came to serious Christianity? How many a duty have they lost, for want of doing them thoroughly, and to the purpose! Perhaps their place in hell may be the easier, and so their labour is not lost; but as to the obtaining of salvation, it is all lost. "Many shall seek to enter, and shall not be able," (Luke xiii. 24,) who, if they had striven, might have been able. Oh! therefore, put to a little more diligence and strength, that all be not in vain that you have done already.

Sect. XV. 14. Furthermore,^r We have lost a great deal of precious time already, and therefore it is reason that we labour so much the harder. If a traveller do sleep or trifle out the most of the day, he must travel so much the faster in the evening, or else he is likely to fall short of his journey's end. With some of us, our childhood and youth is gone; with some also their middle age is past; and the time before us is very uncertain and short. What a deal of time have we slept away, and talked away, and played away; what a deal have we spent in worldly thoughts and labours, or in mere idleness! Though in likelihood the most of our time is spent, yet how little of our work is done! and is it not time now to bestir ourselves in the evening of our days? The time which we have lost can never be recalled: should we not then redeem it by improving the little which remaineth? You may receive, indeed, an equal recompense with those that have borne the burden and heat of the day, though you came not in till the last hour; but then you must be sure to labour soundly that hour. It is surely enough that we have lost so much of our lives; let us not now be so foolish as to lose the rest. (1 Pet. iv. 2—4).

Sect. XVI. 15. Consider, The greater are your layings out, the greater will be your comings in. Though you may seem to lose your labour at the present, yet the hour cometh when you

^r Agedum, ad computationem ætatem tuam revoca: dic quantum ex isto tempore creditor, quantum amica, quantum rex, quantum cliens abstulerit; quantum servorum coercitio, quantum officiosa per urbem discursatio? Adjice morbos quos manu fecimus. Adjice quod et fine usu jacuit. Videbis te pauciores annos habere quam numeras.—*Senec. de Brev. Vit. c. 3.* Quam multi vitam tuam diripuerint, te non sentiente quid perderes? Quantum vanus dolor, stulta lætitia, avida cupiditas, blanda conversatio, abstulerit? Quam exiguum tibi de tuo relictum est?—*Idem ibid.*

shall find it with advantage. The seed which is buried and dead, will bring forth a plentiful increase at the harvest. Whatever you do, and whatever you suffer, this everlasting rest will pay for all. There is no repenting of labours and sufferings in heaven; none says, 'Would I had spared my pains, and prayed less, or been less strict and precise, and did as the rest of my neighbours did!' There is never such a thought in heaven as this. But, on the contrary, it will be their joy to look back upon their labours and tribulations, and to consider how the mighty power of God did bring them through all. Whoever complained that he came to heaven at too dear a rate, or that his salvation cost him more labour than it was worth? We may say of all our labours, as Paul of his sufferings, "For I reckon that the sufferings (and labours) of this present time, are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." (Rom. viii. 18.) We labour but for a moment, but we shall rest for ever. Who would not put forth all his strength for one hour, when he may be a prince while he lives for that hour's work? Oh! what is the duty and suffering of a short frail life, which is almost at an end as soon as it begins, in respect of the endless joys with God? Will not all our tears then be wiped away, and all the sorrows of our duties forgotten? but yet the Lord will not forget them; "for he is not unjust to forget our work and labour of love." (Heb. vi. 10.)

Sect. XVII. 16. Consider, Violence and laborious striving for salvation, is the way that the wisdom of God hath directed us to as best, as his sovereign authority hath appointed us as necessary. Who knows the way to heaven better than the God of heaven? When men tell us that we are too strict and precise, whom do they accuse, God or us? If we do no more than what we are commanded, nor so much neither, (Luke xvii. 19,) they may as well say, God hath made laws which are too strict and precise. Surely, if it were a fault, it would lie in him that commands it, and not in us who are bound to obey. And dare these men think that they are wiser than God? Do they know better than he, what men must do to be saved? These are the men that ask us whether we are wiser than all the world besides, and yet they will pretend to be wiser than God. What do they less, when God bids us take the most diligent course, and they tell us it is more ado than needs? Mark well the language of the laws of God, and see how you can reconcile it with the language of the world, "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent

take it by force." (Matt. xi. 12.) Or, as it is in Luke xvi. 16, "Every one presseth into it." "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able." (Luke xiii. 24.) So "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might, for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest." (Matt. vii. 13, 14; Eccles. ix. 10.) "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run that you may obtain." (1 Cor. ix. 24.) "If a man strive for masteries, yet he is not crowned except he strive lawfully,"^s (2 Tim. ii. 5,) that is, powerfully and prevailingly. "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling." (Phil. ii. 12.) "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure." (2 Pet. i. 10.) "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinners appear?" (1 Pet. iv. 18.) So Phil. i. 27, and iii. 14; 1 Tim. vi. 12, 18, 19; Deut. vi. 5, &c. This is the constant language of Christ; and which shall I follow, God or men; yea, and that the worst and most wicked men? Shall I think that every ignorant, worldly sot, that can only call a man 'puritan,' knows more than Christ, and can teach him to make laws for his church, or can tell God how to mend the Scriptures? Let them bring all the seeming reasons that they can against the holy, violent striving of the saints, and this sufficeth me to confute them all, that God is of another mind, and he hath commanded me to do much more than I do; and though I could see no reason for it, yet his will is reason enough to me. I am sure God is worthy to govern us, if we were better than we are. Who should make laws for us, but he that made us? And who should line out the way to heaven, but he that must bring us thither? And who should determine on what conditions we shall be saved, but he that bestows the gift of salvation? So that let world, or flesh, or devil, speak against a holy, laborious course, this is my answer, 'God hath commanded it.'

Sect. XVIII. 17. Moreover, It is a course that all men in the world either do, or will approve of. There is not a man that ever was, or is, or shall be, but shall one day justify the diligence of the saints, and give his verdict in the approbation of their wisdom. And who would not go that way which every man shall applaud? It is true, it is now a way every where

^s Non omnes dicuntur episcopi, sed qui graviter et strenuè se gesserint.
—*Sarcer.* in loc.

spoken against, and hated : but let me tell you, 1. Most that speak against it, do in their judgments approve of it ; only because the practice of godliness is against the pleasures of the flesh, therefore do they against their own judgments resist it. They have not one word of reason against it, but reproaches and railing are their best arguments. 2. Those that now are against it, whether in judgment or passion, will shortly be, every man, of another mind. If they come to heaven, their mind must be changed before they come there. If they go to hell, their judgment will then be altered, whether they will or not. If you could speak with every soul that suffereth those torments, and ask their judgments, whether it be possible to be too diligent and serious in seeking salvation, you may easily conjecture what answer they would return. Take the most bitter derider or persecutor of godliness, even those that will venture their lives to overthrow it, if those men do not shortly eat their own words, and wish a thousand times that they had been the most holy, diligent, Christians on earth, then let me bear the shame of a false prophet for ever.^t Remember this, you that will be of the opinion and way that most are of. Why then will you not be of the opinion that all will be shortly of ? Why will you be of a judgment which you are sure you shall all shortly change ? O that you were but as wise in this, as those in hell !

Sect. XIX. 18. Consider, They that have been the most serious, painful Christians, when they come to die, do exceedingly lament their negligence. Those that have wholly addicted themselves to the work of God, and have made it the main business of their lives, and have slighted the world and mortified the flesh, and have been the wonders of the world for their heavenly conversations, yet when conscience is let loose upon them, and God withdraws the sense of his love, how do their failings wound them and disquiet them ! What terrors do the souls of men undergo, who are generally admired for their godliness and innocency ; even those that are hated and derided by the world for being so strict, and are thought to be almost besides themselves for their extraordinary diligence, yet commonly when they lie a dying, do wish, O that they had been a thousand times more holy, more heavenly, more laborious for their souls ! What a case then will the negligent world be in, when

^t Duty at last is sweet ; it comes off with heaven, though hell dog it for a time ; saith Lockier sweetly (as all). See him further of the good end of duty, on Col. i. 24. p. 300.

their consciences are awaked, when they lie dying, and look behind them upon a lazy, negligent life, and look before them upon a severe and terrible judgment; what an esteem will they have of a holy life! For my own part, I may say, as Erasmus, "*Accusant quod nimium fecerim; verum conscientia mea me accusat quod minus fecerim, quodque lentior fuerim,*" "They accuse me for doing too much, but my own conscience accuseth me for doing too little, and being too slow:" and it is far easier bearing the scorns of the world than the scourges of conscience. The world speaks at a distance without me, so that though I hear their words, I can choose whether I will feel them; but my conscience speaks within me at the very heart, so that every check doth pierce me to the quick. Conscience, when it is reprehended justly, is the messenger of God; but ungodly revilers are but the voice of the devil. I had rather be reproached by the devil for seeking salvation, than to be reproved of God for neglecting it: I had rather the world should call me puritan in the devil's name, than conscience should call me loiterer in God's name. As God and conscience are more useful friends than Satan and the world, so are they more dreadful, irresistible enemies.

Sect. XX. 19. Consider, How far many a man goes, and what a deal of pains he takes for heaven, and yet misseth it for want of more. When every man that striveth is not crowned; (2 Tim. ii. 5;) and many shall seek to enter in, and not be able; (Luke xxiii. 24;) and the very children of the kingdom shall be shut out; (Matt. xiii. 41;) and they that have heard the word, and received it with joy; (Matt. xiii. 20;) and have heard the preacher gladly, and done many things after him, shall yet perish; (Mark vi. 20;) it is time for us to look about us, and take heed of loitering. When they that seek God daily, and delight to know his ways, and ask of him the ordinances of justice, and take delight in approaching to God, and that in fasting and afflicting their souls, (Isa. lvi. 2, 3,) are yet shut out with hypocrites and unbelievers; when they that have been enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and of the good word of God, and of the powers of the world to come, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, may yet fall away beyond recovery, and crucify to themselves the Son of God. (Heb. vi. 4—6). When they that have received the knowledge of the truth, and were sanctified by the blood of the covenant, may yet sin wilfully, and tread underfoot the Son of God, and do despise

to the Spirit of grace, till there is nothing left them but the fearful expectation of judgment, and fire that shall devour the adversaries, (Heb. x. 26—29,) should not this rouse us out of our laziness and security? How far hath many a man followed Christ, and yet forsaken him when it comes to the selling of all, to bearing the cross, to burning at the stake, or to the renouncing of all his worldly interests and hopes! What a deal of pains hath many a man taken for heaven, that never did obtain it! How many prayers, sermons, fasts, alms, good desires, confessions, sorrow and tears for sin, &c. have all been lost, and fallen short of the kingdom! Methinks this should affright us out of our sluggishness, and make us strive to outstrip the highest formalist.

Sect. XXI. 20. Consider, God hath resolved that heaven shall not be had on easier terms. He hath not only commanded it as a duty, but hath tied our salvation to the performance of it. Rest must always follow labour. He that hath ordained in his church on earth, 'that he that will not labour, shall not eat,' hath also decreed concerning the everlasting inheritance, 'that he that strives not, shall not enter.' They must now lay up a treasure in heaven, if they will find it there. (Matt. xix. 20.) They must seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. (Matt. vi. 33.) They must not labour for the food that perisheth, but for that food which endureth to everlasting life. (John vi. 27.) Some think that it is good to be holy, but yet not of such absolute necessity but that a man may be saved without it; but God hath determined on the contrary, that without it, no man shall see his face. (Heb. xii. 14.) Seriousness is the very thing wherein consisteth our sincerity. If thou art not serious, thou art not a Christian. It is not only a high degree in Christianity, but of the very life and essence of it. As fencers upon a stage, who have all the skill at their weapons, and do eminently and industriously act their parts, but do not seriously intend the death of each other, do differ from soldiers or combatants, who fight in good sadness for their lives, just so do hypocrites differ from serious Christians. If men could be saved without this serious diligence, they would never regard it; all the excellencies of God's ways would never entice them. But when God hath resolved, that if you will have your ease here, you shall have none hereafter, is it not wisdom, then, to bestir ourselves to the utmost?

Sect. XXII. 21. And thus, reader, I dare confidently say, I have

showed thee sufficient reason against thy slothfulness and negligence, if thou be not a man resolved to shut thine eyes, and to destroy thyself wilfully, in despite of reason. Yet, lest all this should not prevail, I will add somewhat more, if it be possible, to persuade thee to be serious in thy endeavours for heaven.

1. Consider, God is in good earnest with you, and why then should not you be so with him? In his commands, he means as he speaks, and will verily require your real obedience. In his threatenings he is serious, and will make them all good against the rebellious. In his promises, he is serious, and will fulfil them to the obedient, even to the least tittle. In his judgments he is serious, as he will make his enemies know to their terror. Was not God in good earnest when he drowned the world, when he consumed Sodom and Gomorrah, when he scattered the Jews? Hath he not been in good sadness with us lately in England, and Ireland, and Germany? And very shortly will he lay hold on his enemies, particularly man by man, and make them know that he is in good earnest: especially when it comes to the great reckoning day. And is it time, then, for us to dally with God?

2. Jesus Christ was serious in purchasing our redemption. He was serious in teaching, when he neglected his meat and drink. (John iv. 32.) He was serious in praying, when he continued all night at it. (Luke vi. 12.) He was serious in doing good, when his kindred came and laid hands on him, thinking he had been beside himself. (Mark iii. 20, 21.) He was serious in suffering, when he fasted forty days, was tempted, betrayed, spit on, buffeted, crowned with thorns, sweat water and blood; was crucified, pierced, and died. There was no jesting in all this, and should not we be serious in seeking our own salvation?

3. The Holy Ghost is serious in soliciting us for our happiness; his motions are frequent, and pressing, and importunate: he striveth with our hearts. (Gen. vi. 3.) He is grieved when we resist him; (Ephes. iv. 30;) and should not we then be serious in obeying his motions, and yielding to his suit?

4. God is serious in hearing our prayers, and delivering us from our dangers, and removing our troubles, and bestowing his mercies.^a When we are afflicted, he is afflicted with us. (Isa.

^a For my own part, my sorrows are so real and pressing, that if God be not serious in hearing and helping me, I shall perish immediately; nor would I be without his tender regardful providence one day for a world: and should I then neglect him?

xiii. 9.) He regardeth every groan and sigh, he putteth every tear into his bottle; he condoleth their misery, when he is forced to chastise them; "How shall I give thee up, O Ephraim?" saith the Lord, "how shall I make thee as Admah, and as Zeboim? my heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together." (Hos. xi. 8.) He heareth even the rebellious oft-times, when they call upon him in their misery; "when they cry to him in their trouble, he delivereth them out of their distress." (Psalm lxxviii. 37, 38, and cvii. 10—13, 19, 28.) Yea, the next time thou art in trouble, thou wilt beg for a serious regard of thy prayers, and grant of thy desires. And shall we be so slight in the work of God, when we expect he should be so regardful of us? Shall we have real mercies down weight; and shall we return such superficial and frothy service?

5. Consider, The ministers of Christ are serious in instructing and exhorting you, and why should not you be as serious in obeying their instructions? They are serious in study; serious in prayer; serious in persuading your souls to the obedience of Christ; they beg of God, they beg of you, they hope, they wait, they long more for the conversion and salvation of your souls, than they do for any worldly good: "you are their boasting, their crown and joy." (1 Thess. ii. 19, 20.) "Your steadfastness in Christ they value as their lives." (1 Thess. iii. 8.) They are content to "be offered up in the service of your faith." (Phil. ii. 17.) If they kill themselves with study and preaching, or if they suffer martyrdom for preaching the Gospel; they think their lives are well bestowed, if their preaching do but prevail for saving of your souls. And shall other men be so painful and careful for our salvation, and should you be so careless and negligent of your own? Is it not a serious charge that is given to ministers in 2 Tim. iv. 1? And a serious pattern that is given them in Acts xx. 30, 31? Surely no man can be bound to be more serious and painful for the welfare of another, than he is bound to be for himself.

6. How serious and diligent are all the creatures in their service to thee! What haste makes the sun to compass the world; and how truly doth it return at its appointed hour! So do the moon and other planets. The springs are always flowing for thy use; the rivers still running; the spring and harvest keep their times. How hard doth thy ox labour for thee from day to day; how painfully and speedily doth thy horse bear thee in travel! And shall all these be laborious, and thou only

negligent? Shall they all be so serious in serving thee, and yet thou be so slight in thy service to God?^x

7. Consider, The servants of the world and the devil are serious and diligent; they ply their work continually with unweariedness and delight, as if they could never do enough; they make haste, and march furiously, as if they were afraid of coming to hell too late. They bear down ministers, and sermons, and counsel, and all before them. And shall they do more for the devil, than thou wilt do for God; or be more diligent for damnation, than thou wilt be for salvation? Hast not thou a better master, and sweeter employment, and greater encouragement, and a better reward?^y

8. The time was when thou wast serious thyself in thy service to Satan and the flesh, if it be not so still; dost thou not remember how eagerly thou didst follow thy sports; or how violently thou wast addicted to customs, or evil company, or sinful delights; or how earnestly thou wast bent after thy profits, or rising in the world? And wilt thou not now be more earnest and violent for God? "What profit hadst thou then in those things whereof thou art now ashamed? For the end of those things is death; but now being made free from sin, and become the servants of God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." (Rom. vi. 21, 22.)

9. You are yet to this day in good earnest about the matters of this life; if you are sick, what serious groans and complaints do you utter! All the town shall quickly know it, if your pain be great. If you are poor, how hard do you labour for your living, lest your wife and children should starve or famish! If one fall down in a swoon in the house, or street, or in the congregation, how seriously will you run to relieve and recover them! And is not the business of our salvation of far greater moment? Are you not poor; and should you not then be labourers? Are you not in fight for your lives; and is it time to sleep? Are you not in a race; and is not the prize the crown of glory? and should you then sit still or take your ease?

10. There is no jesting in heaven, nor in hell. The saints

^x Lege Fabritium in 'Destructorio Vitiorum,' part v. c. 2. A. Ubi elegantem etiam historiam refert ex Linco de oculo morali, de Monacho episcopum ignavum reprehendente, inter eos colloquio; et ex Augustino solem ignavum exprobrantem inferit.

^y Accidiosi erubescere possunt qui non tam diligenter laborant ad impetrandum gaudium cœli sicut multi impiorum laborant ad impetrandum pœnam inferni.—*Fabritius in Destructorio Vitiorum*, part v. c. 2. B. Rom. vi. 21.

have a real happiness, and the damned a real misery; the saints are serious and high in their joy and praise, and the damned are serious and deep in their sorrow and complaints. There are no remiss or sleepy praises in heaven, nor any remiss or sleepy lamentations in hell; all men there are in good earnest, and should we not then be serious now? Reader, I dare promise thee, the thoughts of these things will shortly be serious thoughts with thyself. When thou comest to death or judgment, O what deep heart-piercing thoughts wilt thou have of eternity! methinks I foresee thee already astonished, to think how thou couldst possibly make so light of these things! methinks I even hear thee crying out of thy stupidity and madness!

Sect. XXIII. 23. And now, reader, having laid thee down these undeniable arguments, I do here, in the name of God, demand thy resolution: what sayest thou; wilt thou yield obedience or not? I am confident thy conscience is convinced of thy duty. Darest thou now go on in thy common careless course, against the plain evidence of reason and commands of God, and against the light of thy own conscience? Darest thou live as loosely, and sin as boldly, and pray as seldom and as coldly, as before? Darest thou now as carnally spend the sabbath, and slubber over the service of God as slightly, and think of thine everlasting state, as carelessly as before? or, dost thou not rather resolve to gird up the loins of thy mind, and to set thyself wholly about the work of thy salvation; and to do it with all thy strength and might; and to break over all the oppositions of the world, and to slight all their scorns and persecutions; “to cast off the weight that hangeth on thee, and the sin that doth so easily beset thee; and to run with patience and speed the race that is set before thee?” (1 Pet. i. 13; Heb. xii. 1, 2.) I hope these are thy full resolutions: if thou be well in thy wits, I am sure they are.

Yet because I know the strange obstinacy and rockiness of the heart of man, and because I would fain drive this nail to the head, and leave these persuasions fastened in thy heart, that so if it be possible thou mightest be awakened to thy duty, and thy soul might live, I shall therefore proceed with thee yet a little further; and I once more entreat thee to stir up thy attention, and go along with me in the free and sober use of thy reason, while I propound to thee these following questions: and I command thee from God, that thou stifle not

thy conscience, and resist not conviction, but answer them faithfully, and obey accordingly.

Quest. 1. If you could grow rich by religion, or get lands and lordships by being diligent in godliness; or if you could get honour or preferment by it in the world; or could be recovered from sickness by it, or could live for ever in prosperity on earth; what kind of lives would you then lead, and what pains would you take in the service of God? And is not the rest of the saints a more excellent happiness than all this?

Quest. 2. If the law of the land did punish every breach of the sabbath, or every omission of family duties, or secret duties, or every cold and heartless prayer, with death: if it were felony or treason to be ungodly and negligent in worship, and loose in your lives, what manner of persons would you then be, and what lives would you lead! And is not eternal death more terrible than temporal?

Quest. 3. If it were God's ordinary course to punish every sin with some present judgment, so that every time a man swears, or is drunk, or speaks a lie, or backbiteth his neighbour, he should be struck dead, or blind, or lame in the place. If God did punish every cold prayer, or neglect of duty, with some remarkable plague; what manner of persons would you then be? If you should suddenly fall down dead like Ananias and Sapphira, with the sin in your hands, or the plague of God should seize upon you as upon the Israelites, while their sweet morsels were yet in their mouths. (Psal. lxxviii. 30.) If but a mark should be set in the forehead of every one that neglected a duty, or committed a sin; what kind of lives would you then lead! And is not eternal wrath more terrible than all this? Give but reason leave to speak.

Quest. 4. If one of your old acquaintance and companions in sin should come from the dead, and tell you, that he suffered the torments of hell for those sins that you are guilty of, and for neglecting those duties which you neglect, and for living such a careless, worldly, ungodly life, as you now live, and should therefore advise you to take another course: if you should meet such a one in your chamber when you are going to bed, and he should say to you, 'Oh, take heed of this carnal, unholy life! set yourself to seek the Lord with all your might; neglect not your soul; prepare for eternity, that you come not to the place of torment that I am in;' how would this take with you; and what manner of persons would you afterwards be? It

is written in the life of Bruno,^z that a doctor of great note for learning and godliness being dead, and being brought to the church to be buried, while they were in their popish devotions, and came to the words *Responde mihi*, the corpse arose in the bier, and with a terrible voice cried out, “Justo Dei judicio accusatus sum,” “I am accused at the just judgment of God;” at which voice the people ran all out of the church affrighted. On the morrow when they came again to perform the obsequies, to the same words as before, the corpse arose again, and cried with a hideous voice, “Justo Dei judicio judicatus sum,” “I am judged at the righteous judgment of God;” whereupon the people ran away again amazed. The third day almost all the city came together, and when they came to the same words as before, the corpse rose again, and cried with a more doleful voice than before, “Justo Dei judicio condemnatus sum,” “I am condemned at the just judgment of God.” The consideration whereof, that a man reputed so upright, should yet by his own confession be damned, caused Bruno, and the rest of his companions, to enter into the strict order of the Carthusians. If the voice of the dead man could affright them into superstition, should not the warnings of God affright thee into true devotion?

Quest. 5. If you knew that this were the last day you had to live in the world, how would you spend this day?^a If you were sure when you go to bed, that you should never rise again, would not your thoughts of another life be more serious that night? If you knew when you were praying, that you should never pray more, would you not be more earnest and importunate in that prayer? Or if you knew when you are preaching, or hearing, or exhorting your sinful acquaintance, that this were the last opportunity you should have, would you not ply it more closely than usually you do? Why, you do not know but it may be the last: and you are sure your last is near at hand.

Quest. 6. If you had seen the general dissolution of the world, and all the pomp and glory of it consumed to ashes: if you saw all on a fire about you, sumptuous buildings, cities,

^z Lege vitam Brunonis ante Commentar. in Epistolas, ut et Polydorum Virgil. lib. vii. de Invention. Rer. c. 3. p. (mihi) 428.

^a Quid ergo in causa est? Tanquam semper victuri vivitis: nunquam vobis fragilitas vestra succurrit. Non observatis quantum jam temporis transierit. Velut ex pleno et abundanti perditis; cum interim fortasse ille ipse alicui vel homini vel rei donatus, ultimus dies sit. Omnia tanquam mortales tenetis, omnia tanquam immortales concupiscitis.—*Senec. de Brev. Vit.* c. 4.

kingdoms, land, water, earth, heaven, all flaming about your ears: if you had seen all that men laboured for, and sold their souls for, gone; friends gone; the place of your former abode gone; the history ended, and all come down; what would such a sight as this persuade you to do? Why, such a sight thou shalt certainly see. I put my question to thee in the words of the apostle. "Seeing all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for, and hasting unto, the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat!" (2 Pet. iii. 12.) As if he should say, 'We cannot possibly conceive or express what manner of persons we should be in all holiness and godliness, when we do but think of the sudden, and certain, and terrible dissolution of all things below.'

Quest. 7. What, if you had seen the process of the judgment of the great day: if you had seen the judgment-seat, and the books opened, and the most stand trembling on the left hand of the Judge, and Christ himself accusing them of their rebellions and neglects, and remembering them of all their former slightings of his grace, and at last condemning them to perpetual perdition: if you had seen the godly standing on the right hand, and Jesus Christ acknowledging their faithful obedience, and adjudging them to the possession of the joy of their Lord: what manner of persons would you have been after such a sight as this? Why, this sight thou shalt one day see, as sure as thou livest. And why then should not the foreknowledge of such a day awake thee to thy duty?

Quest. 8. What, if you had once seen hell open, and all the damned there in their easeless torments, and had heard them crying out of their slothfulness in the day of their visitation, and wishing that they had but another life to live, and that God would but try them once again: one crying out of his neglect of duty, and another of his loitering and trifling, when he should have been labouring for his life: what manner of persons would you have been after such a sight as this? What, if you had seen heaven opened, as Stephen did, and all the saints there triumphing in glory, and enjoying the end of their labours and sufferings, what a life would you lead after such a sight as this! Why, you will see this with your eyes before it be long.

Quest. 9. What, if you had lain in hell but one year, or one day, or hour, and there felt all those torments that now you do

but hear of, and God should turn you into the world again, and try you with another life-time, and say, 'I will see whether thou wilt be yet any better, what manner of persons would you be?' If you were to live a thousand years, would you not gladly live as strictly as the precisest saints, and spend all those years in prayer and duty, so you might but escape the torment which you suffered? How seriously then would you speak of hell, and pray against it, and hear, and read, and watch, and obey! How earnestly would you admonish the careless to take heed, and look about them to prevent their ruin! And will not you take God's word for the truth of this, except you feel it? Is it not your wisdom to do as much now to prevent it, as you would do to remove it when it is too late? Is it not more wisdom to spend this life in labouring for heaven, while ye have it, than to lie in torment, wishing for more time in vain?

Quest. 10. What, if you had been possessed but one year of the glory of heaven, and there joined with the saints and angels in the beholding of God, and singing his praise, and afterwards should be turned into the world again, what a life would you lead; what pains would you take rather than to be deprived of such incomparable glory! Would you think any cost too great, or diligence too much? If one of those that are now in heaven, should come to live on the earth again, what persons would they be; what a stir would they make; how seriously would they drive on the business of their salvation! The country would ring of their exceeding holy and strict conversations. They would as far excel the holiest persons on earth, as they excel the careless world. Before they would lose that blessed estate, they would follow God with cries both day and night, and throw away all, and suffer every day a death. And should not we do as much to obtain it?

Sect. XXV. And thus I have said enough, if not to stir up the lazy sinner to a serious working out his salvation, yet at least to silence him, and leave him inexcusable at the judgment of God. If thou canst, after the reading of all this, go on in the same neglect of God and thy soul, and draw out the rest of thy life in the same dull and careless course, as thou hast hitherto done; and if thou hast so far conquered and stupified thy conscience, that it will quietly suffer thee to forget all this, and to trifle out the rest of thy time in the business of the world, when in the mean while thy salvation is in danger, and the Judge is at the door, I have then no more to say to thee: it is as

good to speak to a post or a rock. Only as we do by our friends when they are dead and our words and actions can do them no good, yet to testify our affections we weep and mourn for them; so will I also do for these deplorable souls. It makes my heart sad, and even tremble to think, how they will stand, sad and trembling, before the Lord! and how confounded and speechless they will be, when Christ shall reason with them concerning their negligence and sloth! when he shall say, as the Lord doth in Jer. ii. 5, 9, 11, 15, "What iniquity have your fathers (or you) found in me, that ye are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity?" &c. Did I ever wrong you, or do you any harm, or ever discourage you from following my service: was my way so bad that you could not endure it; or my service so base that you could not stoop to it: did I stoop to the fulfilling of the law for you, and could not you stoop to the fulfilling of the easy conditions of my Gospel: was the world or Satan a better friend to you than I; or have they done for you more than I have? Try now whether they will save you, or whether they will recompense you for the loss of heaven, or whether they will be as good to you as I would have been; O, what will the wretched sinner answer to any of this! But though man will not hear, yet we may have hope in speaking to God. Lord, smite these rocks till they gush forth waters: though these ears are deaf, say to them, 'Ephatha,' Be opened: though these sinners be dead, let that power speak, which sometime said, "Lazarus, arise!" We know they will be awakened at the last resurrection: Oh! but then it will be only to their sorrow. O, thou that didst weep and groan in spirit over a dead Lazarus, pity these sad and senseless souls till they are able to weep, and groan for, and pity themselves. As thou hast bid thy servants speak, so speak now thyself; they will hear thy voice speaking to their hearts, that will not hear mine speaking to their ears. Long hast thou knocked at these hearts in vain, now break the doors, and enter in, and pass by all their long resistance.

Sect. XXVI. Yet I will add a few more words to the godly in special, to show them why they, above all men, should be laborious for heaven; and that there is a great deal of reason, that though all the world besides do sit still, and be careless, yet they should abhor that laziness and negligence, and should lay out all their strength on the work of God. To this end, I desire them also to answer soberly to these few interrogatories.

Quest. 1. What manner of persons should those be, whom God hath chosen out to be vessels of mercy, and hath given them the very cream and quintessence of his blessings, when the rest of the world are passed by, and put off with common, and temporal, and left-hand mercies? They who have the blood of Christ given them, and the Spirit for sanctification, consolation, and preservation, and the pardon of sins, and adoption to sonship, and the guard of angels, and the mediation of the Son of God, and the special love of the Father, and the promise and seal of everlasting rest! Do but tell me in good sadness, what kind of lives these men should live?

Quest. 2. What manner of persons should those be, who have felt the smart of their negligence so much as the godly have done? In the new birth, in their several wounds and trouble of conscience, in their doubts and fears, in their sharp afflictions on body and state: they that have groaned and cried out so oft, under the sense and effects of their negligence, and are likely enough to feel it again, if they do not reform it, surely, one would think they should be slothful no more.

Quest. 3. What manner of persons should those be in holy diligence, who have been so long convinced of the evil of laziness; and have confessed it on their knees, a hundred and a hundred times, both in public and in private; and have told God in prayer how inexcusably they have therein offended; should they thus confess their sin, and yet commit it, as if they told God what they would do, as well as what they have done?

Quest. 4. What manner of persons should those be in painful godliness, who have bound themselves to God by so many covenants as we have done, and in special have covenanted so oft to be more painful and faithful in his service at every sacrament; on many days of humiliation and thanksgiving; in most of our deep distresses and dangerous sicknesses? We are still ready to bewail our neglects, and to engage ourselves, if God will but try us and trust once again, how diligent and laborious we will be, and how we will improve our time, and reprove offenders, and watch over ourselves, and ply our work; and do him more service in a day than we did in a month. The Lord pardon our perfidious covenant-breaking; and grant that our engagements may not condemn us.

Quest. 5. What manner of persons should they be, who are so near to God as we, who are his children, in his family, still under his eye; the objects of his greatest jealousy, as well as

love? Nadab and Abihu can tell you, that the flames of jealousy are hottest about his altar: (Lev. x. 1, 2 :) and Uzza, and the "fifty thousand and seventy Bethshemites, (1 Sam. vi. 19,) though dead, do yet tell you, that justice, as well as mercy, is most active about the ark. And Ananias and his wife can tell you, that profession is no cover for transgression. (Acts v. 4, 5. &c.) Judgment beginneth at the house of God: (1 Pet. iv. 17:) and the destroying angel doth begin at the sanctuary. (Ezek. ix. 5, 6.)

Quest. 6. What manner of men should they be in duty, who have received so much encouragement, as we have done by our success? Who have tasted such sweetness in diligent obedience, as doth much more than countervail all the pains; who have so often had experience of the wide difference between lazy and laborious duty, by their different issues; who have found all our lazy duties unfruitful, and all our strivings and wrestlings with God successful, so that we were never importunate with God in vain. We who have had so many admirable national and personal deliverances upon urgent seeking; and have received almost all our solid comforts in a way of close and constant duty: how should we, above all men, ply our work!

Quest. 7. What manner of men should they be, who are yet at such great uncertainties, whether they are sanctified or justified, or whether they are the children of God or not; or what shall everlastingly become of their souls, as most of the godly that I meet with are? They that have discovered the excellency of the kingdom, and yet have not discovered their interest in it, but discern a danger of perishing or losing all, and have need of that advice, Heb. iv. 1, and have so many doubts to wrestle with daily as we have: how should such men bestir themselves in time!

Quest. 8. What manner of persons should they be in holiness, who have so much of the great work yet undone as we have;^b so many sins in so great a strength; graces weak, sanctification imperfect, corruption still working our ruin, and taking advantage of all our omissions? When we are as a boatman on the water, let him row ever so hard a month together,

^b Ille certus est bonæ voluntatis profectus, si ea quæ accipit à Deo, ita vigilantè sollicitèque custodiat, ut custodiæ divinæ adjutorium frequentia orationis et studio bonæ operationis exposcat. Ita fiet ut dum oranti auxilium tribuitur, laborans retributione boni operis non privetur.—*Fulgentius de Ver. Præd.* c. 17. Nemo est extra periculum malitiæ nisi qui totam eam excusit.—*Senec. Epist.* 75.

yet if he do but slack his hand, and think to ease himself, his boat goes faster down the stream than before it went up ; so do our souls, when we think to ease ourselves by abating our pains in duty. Our time is short : our enemies mighty : our hinderances many : God seems yet at a distance from many of us : our thoughts of him are dull, and strange, and unbelieving : our acquaintance and communion with Christ are small ; and our desires to be with him are as small. And should men in our case stand still ?

Quest. 9. What manner of men should they be in their diligence, whose lives and duties are of so great concernment to the saving or destroying of a multitude of souls ? when, if we slip, so many are ready to stumble ; and if we stumble, so many are ready to fall. If we pray hard for them, and admonish them daily, and faithfully, and plainly, and exhort them with bowels of pity and love, and go before them in a holy, inoffensive conversation, it is twenty to one but we may be instruments of saving many of them from everlasting perdition, and bringing them to the possession of the inheritance with us : on the contrary, if we silently neglect them, or sinfully offend them, we may be occasions of their perpetual torment : and what a sad thought is that to an honest and merciful heart, that we may not destroy the souls for whom Christ died ! That we may not rob them of their everlasting happiness, and God of the praises that in heaven they would give him, what manner of persons should we be in our duties and examples !

Quest. 10. Lastly : What manner of persons should they be, on whom the glory of the great God doth so much depend ? Men will judge of the father by the children, and of the master by the servants. We bear his image ; and therefore men will measure him by his representation. He is nowhere in the world so lively represented as in his saints : and shall they set him forth as a patron of viciousness or idleness ! All the world is not capable of honouring or dishonouring God so much as we : and the least of this honour is of more worth than all our lives. I have harped all this while upon the apostle's string ; (2 Pet. iii. 11 ;) and now let me give it the last touch. Seeing, then, that all these things forementioned are so, I charge thee, that art a Christian, in my Master's name, to consider and resolve the question, What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness ? And let thy life answer the question as well as thy tongue.

Sect. XXVII. I have been larger upon this use than at first I intended ; partly because of the general neglect of heaven, that all sorts are guilty of ; partly because men's salvation depends upon their present striving and seeking ;^c partly because the doctrine of free grace, misunderstood, is lately so abused to the cherishing of sloth and security ; partly because many eminent men of late do judge, that to work or labour for life and salvation, is mercenary, legal, and dangerous ; which doctrine, as I have said before, were it by the owners reduced into practice, would undoubtedly damn them ; because they that seek not shall not find, and they that strive not to enter shall be shut out, and they that labour not shall not be crowned ; and partly because it is grown the custom of this distracted age, instead of striving for the kingdom and contending for the faith, to strive with each other about uncertain controversies,^d and to contend about the circumstantial of the faith, wherein the kingdom of God doth no more consist than in meats or drinks, or questions about the law, or genealogies. Sirs, shall we, who are brethren, fall out by the way home, and spend so much of our time about the smaller matters which thousands have been saved without, but never any one saved by them, while Christ and our eternal rest are almost forgotten ? The Lord pardon and heal the folly of his people.

CHAP. VII.

The Third Use : persuading all Men to try their Title to this Rest ; and directing them how to try, that they may know.

SECT. I. I now proceed to the third use which we shall raise hence ; and because it is of very great importance to thy soul,

^c The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom ; but the law bringeth fear. Therefore the knowledge of the law is the beginning of wisdom, and no man is wise without the law. They, therefore, that refuse the law are fools, and consequently atheists and ungodly. How then do some heretics say, that the law is evil, because Paul saith, " By the law is the knowledge of sin ? " To whom I answer, The law did not make sin, but show it. Is not the law good when it teacheth and chastiseth, and is given as a schoolmaster to Christ ? that while we are guided by the fear of castigation, we may be converted to the perfection, which is through Christ ?—*Clemen. Alex. Stromat.* lib. ii.

^d Quocirca imprudenter faciunt qui durissima et παραδοξότατα primo proponunt, &c. Vide Zuinglium 'De Verâ et Falsâ Relig. de Scandalo,' p. 403. Rom. xiv. 17 ; Tit. iii. 9 ; 1 Tim. i. 4, and vi. 5 ; Phil. ii. 14.

I entreat thee to read it the more diligently, and weigh it the more seriously.

Is there such a glorious rest so near at hand ; and shall none enjoy it but the people of God ? What mean the most of the world, then, to live so contentedly without assurance of their interest in this rest, and to neglect the trying of their title to it, when the Lord hath so fully opened the blessedness of that kingdom, which none but a little flock of obedient believers shall possess, and so fully expressed those torments which all the rest of the world must eternally suffer ? A man would think now, that they that believe this to be certainly true, should never be at any quiet in themselves till they knew which of these must be their own state, and were fully assured that they were heirs of the kingdom. Most men that I meet with, say, they believe this word of God to be true ; how then can they sit still in such an utter uncertainty ? One would think they should run up and down from minister to minister, inquiring, ‘How shall I know whether I shall live in heaven or in hell ?’ And that they should even think themselves half in hell, till they were sure to escape it, and to be possessed of rest. Lord, what a wonderful, strange madness is this, that men, who look daily when sickness summons them, and death calls them away, and know they must presently enter upon unchangeable joy or pain, should yet live as uncertain what should be their doom, as if they had never heard of any such state : yea, and live as quietly and as merrily in this uncertainty as if all were made sure, and nothing ailed them, and there were no danger ! Are these men alive or dead ? Are they waking, or are they asleep ? What do they think on ? Where are their hearts ? If they have but a weighty suit at law, how careful are they to know whether it will go for them or against them ! If they were to be tried for their lives at an earthly judicature, how careful would they be to know whether they should be saved or condemned, especially if their care might surely save them ! If they be dangerously sick, they will inquire of the physician, ‘What think you, sir ; shall I escape, or no ?’ But for the business of their salvation, they are content to be uncertain. If you ask most men a reason of their hopes to be saved, they will say, ‘It is because God is merciful, and Christ died for sinners ; and the like general reasons, which any man in the world may give as well as they : but put them to prove their special interest in Christ, and the special saving mercy of God, and they can say nothing to the purpose at all ; or, at least,

nothing out of their hearts and experience, but only out of their reading or invention. Men are desirous to know all things, save God and themselves : they will travel over sea and land to know the situation of countries, and customs of the world : they will go to schools and universities, and turn over multitudes of books, and read and study from year to year, to know the creatures, and to be expert in the sciences : they will go apprentice seven years to learn a trade, which they may live by here ; and yet they never read the book of conscience, nor study the state of their own souls, that they may make sure of living for ever. If God should ask them for their souls, as he did Cain for his brother Abel, they could return but such an answer as he did. If God or man should say to them, 'What case is thy soul in, man ? Is it regenerate, and sanctified, and pardoned, or not ? Is it in a state of life, or a state of death ?' He would be ready to say, 'I know not ; am I my soul's keeper ? I hope well, I trust God with my soul, and trouble not myself with any such thoughts ; I shall speed as well as other men do, and so I will put it to the venture ; I thank God I never made any doubt of my salvation.' Answ. Thou hast the more cause to doubt a great deal, because thou never didst doubt ; and yet more because thou hast been so careless in thy confidence. What do these expressions discover, but a wilful neglect of thy own salvation ? As a shipmaster that should let his vessel alone, and mind other matters, and say 'I will venture it among the rocks, and sands, and gulfs, and waves, and winds ; I will never trouble myself to know whether it shall come safe to the harbour ; I will trust God with it ; it will speed as well as other men's vessels do.'^e Indeed, as well as other men's that are as careless and idle, but not so well as other men's that are diligent and watchful. What horrible abuse of God is this, for men to pretend that they trust God with their souls only to cloak their own wilful negligence ! If thou didst truly trust God, thou wouldst also be ruled by him, and trust him in that way which he hath ap-

^e It is not in external shape and figure that Christians differ from other men : as if they were like the world in mind and thought, in disturbance and instability, in credulity, confusion, and perturbation, and fears, wherewith the minds of all others are distempered, as some think they are. These (that so think) do differ themselves from the world but in opinion and outside, and some external good deeds ; but in heart and mind being entangled in earthly snares, they have not attained the divine rest, and heavenly peace, of the Spirit in their hearts ; because they sought it not of God, nor approved themselves worthy or meet for it.—*Macar. Hom.* 5. *Psal.* 2—9 ; *Heb.* xii, 28, 29.

pointed thee, and upon those terms on which he hath promised thee help. He requires thee to give all diligence, to make thy calling and election sure, and so to trust him. (2 Pet. i. 10.) He hath lined thee out a way in Scripture, by which thou mayest come to be sure; and charged thee to search and try thyself, till thou certainly know. Were he not a foolish traveller that would hold on his way when he doth not know whether it be right or wrong, and say, 'I hope I am right; I will not doubt of it; I will go on, and trust God?' Art not thou guilty of this folly in thy travels to eternity? Not considering that a little serious inquiry and trial, whether thy way be right, might save thee a great deal of labour which thou bestowest in vain, and must undo again, or else thou wilt miss of salvation, and undo thyself. If thou shouldst see a man in despair, or that were certain to be damned for ever when he is dead, wouldst thou not look upon such a man as a pitiful object? Why, thou that livest in wilful uncertainty, and dost not know whether thou shalt be saved or not, art in the next condition to such a person; for aught thou knowest to the contrary, thy case hereafter may be as bad as his. I know not what thou thinkest of thy own state: but, for my part, did I not know what a desperate, blind, dead piece a carnal heart is, I should wonder how thou doest to forget thy misery, and to keep off continual terrors from thy heart; and especially in these cases following:

1. I wonder how thou canst either think or speak of the dreadful God, without exceeding terror and astonishment, as long as thou art uncertain whether he be thy father or thy enemy, and knowest not but all his attributes may be employed against thee. If his saints must rejoice before him with trembling, and serve him in fear; if they that are sure to receive the immoveable kingdom, must yet serve God "with reverence and godly fear, because "he is a consuming fire;" how then should the remembrance of him be terrible to them that know not but this fire may for ever consume them!

2. How dost thou think, without trembling, upon Jesus Christ, when thou knowest not whether his blood hath purged thy soul, or not; and whether he will condemn thee, or acquit thee in judgment; nor whether he be set for thy rising, or for thy fall; (Luke ii. 34;) nor whether he be the corner stone and foundation of thy happiness, or a stone of stumbling to break thee, and grind thee to powder? (Matt. xxi. 24.) Methinks thou shouldst still be in that tune, as Job xxxi. 23,

"Destruction from God is a terror to me, and by reason of his highness I cannot endure."

3. How canst thou open the Bible, and read a chapter, or hear a chapter read, but it should terrify thee? Methinks every leaf should be to thee as Belshazzar's writing upon the wall, except only that which draws thee to try and reform. (Dan. v. 5, 6.) If thou read the promises, thou knowest not whether ever they shall be fulfilled to thee, because thou art uncertain of thy performance of the condition. If thou read the threatenings, for any thing thou knowest, thou dost read thy own sentence. I do not wonder if thou art an enemy to plain preaching; and if thou say of it, and of the minister and Scripture itself, as Ahab of the prophet, "I hate him, for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil." (1 Kings xxii. 8.)

4. I wonder how thou canst, without terror, approach God in prayer, or any duty. When thou callest him thy father, thou knowest not whether thou speak true or false. When thou needest him in thy sickness, or other extremity, thou knowest not whether thou hast a friend to go to, or an enemy. When thou receivest the sacrament, thou knowest not whether thou takest thy blessing or thy bane. And who would wilfully live such a life as this?

5. What comfort canst thou find in any thing which thou possessest? Methinks, friends, and honours, and houses, and lands, should do thee little good, till thou know that thou hast the love of God withal, and shalt have rest with him when thou leavest these. Offer to a prisoner, before he know his sentence, either music, or clothes, or lands, or preferment, and what cares he for any of these, till he know how he shall escape for his life? and then he will look after these comforts of life, and not before: for he knows if he must die the next day it will be small comfort to die rich or honourable. Methinks it should be so with thee, till thou know thine eternal state. Dost not thou, as Ezek. xii. 18, "eat thy bread with quaking, and drink thy drink with trembling and carefulness;" and say, 'Alas! though I have these to refresh my body now, yet I know not what I shall have hereafter?' Even when thou liest down to take thy rest, methinks the uncertainty of thy salvation should keep thee waking, or amaze thee in thy dreams, and trouble thy sleep; and thou shouldst say, as Job in a smaller distress than thine, "When I say, My bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint;

then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through visions." (Job vii. 13, 14.)

6. Doth it not grieve thee to see the people of God so comfortable, when thou hast none thyself; and to think of the glory which they shall inherit, when thou hast no assurance thyself of ever enjoying it?

7. What shift dost thou make to think of thy dying hour? Thou knowest it is near, and there is no avoiding it, nor any medicine found out that can prevent it. Thou knowest it is the "king of terrors," (Job xviii. 14,) and the very inlet to thine unchangeable state. The godly that have some assurance of their future welfare, have yet much ado to submit to it willingly, and find that to die comfortably is a very difficult work. How then canst thou think of it without astonishment, who hast got no assurance of the rest to come? If thou shouldst die this day, and "who knows what a day may bring forth," (Prov. xxvii. 1,) thou dost not know whether thou shalt go straight to heaven or to hell: and canst thou be merry till thou art got out of this dangerous state? Methinks that in Deut. xxviii. 25—27 should be the looking-glass of thy heart.

8. What shift dost thou make to preserve thy heart from horror, when thou rememberest the great judgment day, and the everlasting flames? Dost thou not tremble as Felix, when thou hearest of it; (Acts xxiv. 25;) and as the elders of the town trembled when Samuel came in, saying, "Comest thou peaceably?" (1 Sam. xvi. 4.) So methinks thou shouldst do when the minister comes into the pulpit; and thy heart, whenever thou meditatest of that day, should meditate terror, (Isa. xxxiii. 18,) and thou shouldst even be a terror to thyself, and all thy friends. (Jer. xx. 4.) If the keepers trembled and became as dead men, when they did but see the angels, (Matt. xxviii. 3, 4,) how canst thou think of living in hell with devils till thou hast got some sound assurance that thou shalt escape it? Or, if thou seldom think of these things, the wonder is as great, what shift thou makest to keep those thoughts from thy heart, and to live so quietly in so doleful a state? Thy bed is very soft, or thy heart is very hard, if thou canst sleep soundly in this uncertain case.

I have showed thee the danger, let me next proceed to show thee the remedy.

If this general uncertainty of the world about their salvation, were constrained or remediless, then must it be borne as other unavoidable miseries, and it were unmeet either to reprove them

for it, or dissuade them from it; but, alas! the common cause is wilfulness and negligence. Men will not be persuaded to use the remedy, though it be easy, and at hand, prescribed to them by God himself, and all necessary helps thereunto provided for them. The great means to conquer this uncertainty, is self-examination, or the serious and diligent trying of a man's heart and state, by the rule of Scripture. The Scripture tells us plainly who shall be saved, and who shall not: so that if men would but first search the word, to find out who are these men that shall have rest, and what are their properties by which they may be known; and then next search carefully their own hearts, till they find whether they are those men or not, how could they choose but to come to some certainty? ^f But, alas! either men understand not the nature and use of this duty, or else they will not be at the pains to try. Go through a congregation of a thousand men, and how few of them shall you meet with, that ever bestowed one hour in all their lives in a close examination of their title to heaven! Ask thy own conscience, reader, when was the time, and where was the place, that ever thou solemnly tookest thy heart to task, as in the sight of God, and examinedst it by scripture interrogatories, whether it be born again and renewed, or not; whether it be holy, or not; whether it be set most on God, or on creatures; on heaven, or on earth; and didst follow on this examination till thou hadst discovered thy condition, and so passed sentence on thyself accordingly.

But because this is a work of so high concernment, and so commonly neglected, and men's souls do so much languish everywhere under this neglect, I will, therefore, though it be digressive, 1. Show you that it is possible, by trying, to come to a certainty; 2. Show the hinderances that keep men from trying, and from assurance; 3. I will lay down some motives to persuade you to it; 4. I will give you some directions how you should perform it; 5. And lastly, I will lay you down some marks out of Scripture, by which you may try, and so come to an infallible certainty, whether you are the people of God, for whom this rest remaineth, or not. And to prepare the way to these, I will, a little, first open to you, what examination is, and what that certainty is, which we may expect to attain to.

^f The new creature, in all Christians, doth differ from the men of this world, by the renovation of the mind, and the calmness of their thoughts, and the love of God, and the heavenly love.—*Macarius, Hom. lib. v.*

Sect. II. This self-examination is, an inquiry into the course of our lives, but more especially, into the inward acts of our souls, and trying of their sincerity by the word of God, and accordingly judging of our real and relative estate.

So that examination containeth several acts: 1. There must be the trial of the physical truth, or sincerity of our acts; that is, an inquiry after the very being of them; as whether there be such an act as belief, or desire, or love to God within us or not: this must be discovered by conscience, and the internal sense of the soul; whereby it is able to feel and perceive its own acts, and to know whether they be real or counterfeit.

2. The next is, the trial of the moral truth, or sincerity of acts; whether they are such as agree with the rule and the nature of their objects.^s This is a discursive work of reason, comparing our acts with the rule; it implieth the former knowledge of the being of our acts, and it implieth the knowledge of Scripture in the point in question, and also the belief of the truth of Scripture. This moral, spiritual truth of our acts, is another thing, far different from the natural or physical truth; as far as a man's being differeth from his honesty. One man loveth his wife under the notion of a harlot, or only to satisfy

^s Some of our divines (beyond sea) are so foully mistaken in this, as to tell the papists confidently, that every man that hath true faith, doth know and feel it; not only that he hath faith, but that it is true and saving. Even judicious Testardus is peremptory here; and his learned neighbour Chamier avers: *Hanc operationem Spiritus Sancti sentire ab unoquoque in quo fiat, nec relinquere quenquam ignarum sui.*—*De Fidei Objecto*, tom. 3. lib. xiii. c. 2, 3. But our English divines in this point are the most sound of any in the world; being more exercised, I think, about doubting tender consciences. You see practice discovereth some truth, which mere disputing loseth. *Idem Chamier. pessime asserit, Neminem credere in Christum, qui non credat sibi remissa esse peccata, se esse justificatum.* *Ibid.* c. 5, et pejus adhuc, tom. 3, lib. xiii. c. 6. sec. 14. *Si plane cognoscere (nos esse prædestinatos) intelligas reminisci rem ita se habere, et certam esse, concedo. Hoc enim fides habet vera, nec est vera si non habet.* When a papist discovers one or two such, O how it hardens them against all our doctrine, and makes them read all the rest with invincible prejudice; even as we suspect the more all theirs, because of those errors that we palpably discern. *Nec melius magnus Calvinus 'Institut.'* lib. iii. c. 2. sect. 16. *Fidelis non est nisi qui suæ salutis securitati innixus, diabolo et morti confidenter insultet. Sic alibi passim, et ipse, et Lutherus, et alii plurimi. Vere fidelis non est nisi qui solida persuasione Deum sibi propitium benevolumque patrem esse persuasus, de ejus benignitate omnia sibi pollicetur: nisi qui divinæ erga se benevolentia promissionibus fretus, indubitatam salutis expectationem præsumit.* *Id.* *Ib.* At hæc in sect. 17. mollificat Calvinus, haud sanetamen judicans fidei naturam in certitudine hac positam esse, etsi concedit eam tentationibus et inquietudine aliquando esse impetitam.

his lust ; another loveth his wife with a true, conjugal affection : the former is true, physical love, or true in point of being ; but the latter only is true, moral love. The like may be said in regard of all the acts of the soul. There is a believing, loving, trusting, fearing, rejoicing, all true in point of being, and not counterfeit ; which yet are all false in point of morality and right being, and so no gracious acts at all.

3. The third thing being contained in the work of self-examination, is the judging or concluding of our real estate ; that is, of the habitual temper or disposition of our hearts, by the quality of their acts ; whether they are such acts as prove a habit of holiness, or only some slight disposition ; or whether they are only, by some accident, enticed or enforced, and prove neither habit nor disposition. The, like, also of our evil acts. Now, the acts which prove a habit must be, 1. Free and cheerful ; not constrained, or such as we had rather not do if we could help it. 2. Frequent ; if there be opportunity. 3. Thorough and serious : where note also, that the trial of the soul's disposition by those acts, which make after the end, as desire, love, &c., to God, Christ, heaven, is always more necessary and more certain, than the trial of its disposition to the means only.

4. The last act in this examination, is to conclude or judge of our relative estate, from the former judgment of our acts and habits. As if we find sincere acts, we may conclude that we have the habits ; so from both, we may conclude of our relation. So that our relations, or habits, are neither of them felt or known immediately, but must be gathered from the knowledge of our acts, which may be felt ; as for example : 1. I inquire, whether I believe in Christ, or love God ? 2. If I find that I do, then I inquire next, whether I do it sincerely, according to the rule and the nature of the object ? 3. If I find that I do so, then I conclude that I am regenerate or sanctified. 4. And from both these, I conclude that I am pardoned, reconciled, justified, and adopted into sonship, and title to the inheritance. All this is done in a way of reasoning, thus :

1. He that believes in spiritual sincerity, or he that loves God in spiritual sincerity, is a regenerate man : but I do so believe and love ; therefore, I am regenerate.

2. He that believes in sincerity, or he that is regenerate, for the conclusion will follow upon either, is also pardoned, justified, and adopted : but I do so believe, or I am regenerate ; therefore, I am justified, &c.

Sect. III. Thus you see what examination is. Now let us see what this certainty or assurance is; and indeed it is nothing else but the knowledge of the fore-mentioned conclusions, that we are sanctified, justified, shall be glorified, as they arise from the premises in the work of examination.

So that here you may observe, how immediately this assurance followeth the conclusion in examination, and so, how necessary examination is to the obtaining of assurance, and how conducive thereunto.

Also, that we are not speaking of the certainty of the object, or of the thing itself considered, but of the certainty of the subject, or of the thing to our knowledge.

Also you may observe, that before we can come to this certainty of the conclusion, That we are justified, and shall be glorified, there must be a certainty of the premises. And in respect of the major proposition, He that believeth sincerely, shall be justified and saved; there is requisite in us, 1. A certainty of knowledge; that such a proposition is written in Scripture. 2. A certainty of assent or faith; that this Scripture is the word of God, and true. Also, in respect of the minor proposition, But I do sincerely believe, or love, &c., there is requisite, 1. A certainty of the truth of our faith in point of being; 2. And a certainty of its truth in point of morality, or congruence with the rule, or its right being. And then followeth the assurance, which is the certainty that the conclusion, Therefore I am justified, &c. followeth necessarily upon the former premises.

Here also you must carefully distinguish betwixt the several degrees of assurance.^h All assurance is not of the highest degree. It differs in strength, according to the different degrees of apprehension, in all the fore-mentioned points of certainty which are necessary thereunto. He that can truly raise the foresaid conclusion, that he is justified, &c., from the premises, hath some degree of assurance, though he do it with much weakness, and staggering, and doubting. The weakness of our assurance in any one point of the premises, will accordingly weaken our assurance in the conclusion.

Some, when they speak of certainty of salvation, do mean only such a certainty as excludeth all doubting, and think nothing else can be called certainty, but this high degree. Per-

^h Vide Greg. 'De Valen.' tom. iii. disp. 8. q. 4. punct. 4.

haps some papists mean this, when they deny a certainty. Some also maintain, that Saint Paul's plerophory, or full assurance, is the highest degree of assurance, and that some Christians do in this life attain to it. But Paul calls it full assurance, in comparison of lower degrees, and not because it is perfect. For if assurance be perfect, then all our certainty of knowledge, faith and sense in the premises, must be perfect : and if some grace be perfect, why not all ? And so we turn Novatians, Catharists, Perfectionists. Perhaps in some, their certainty may be so great that it may overcome all sensible doubting, or sensible stirrings of unbelief, by reason of the sweet and powerful acts and effects of that certainty : and yet it doth not overcome all unbelief and uncertainty, so as to expel or nullify them ; but a certain measure of them remaineth still. Even, as when you would heat cold water by the mixture of hot, you may pour in the hot so long till no coldness is felt, and yet the water may be far from the highest degree of heat. So faith may suppress the sensible stirrings of unbelief, and certainty prevail against all the trouble of uncertainty, and yet be far from the highest degree.

So that by this which is said, you may answer the question, What certainty is to be attained in this life ; and what certainty it is that we press men to labour for and expect ?

Furthermore ; you must be sure to distinguish betwixt assurance itself, and the joy, and strength, and other sweet effects which follow assurance, or which immediately accompany it.

It is possible that there may be assurance, and yet no comfort, or little. There are many unskilful, but self-conceited disputers of late, better to manage a club than an argument, who tell us, ' that it must be the Spirit that must assure us of salvation, and not our marks and evidences of grace ; that our comfort must not be taken from any thing in ourselves ; that our justification must be immediately believed, and not proved by our signs of sanctification,¹ &c. Of these in order. 1. It is as wise a question to ask, ' Whether our assurance come from the Spirit, or our evidence, or our faith,' &c., as to ask, ' Whether it be our meat, or our stomach, our teeth, or our hands, that feed us ; or whether it be our eye-sight, or the sun-light, by which

¹ That it is not properly any act of faith at all (much less the justifying act), to believe that my sins are pardoned, or that Christ died in a special sense for me, or that I am a believer, or that I shall be saved—besides what I have said in the Appendix to my Aphorisms of Justification, I refer you for satisfaction to judicious M. A. Wotton 'De Recencil.' part 1. lib. ii. c. 15. n. 3—8, p. 87—90, &c.

we see things?' They are distinct causes, all necessary to the producing of the same effect.

So that, by what hath been said, you may discern that the Spirit, and knowledge, and faith, and Scripture, and inward holiness and reason, and inward sense of conscience, have all several parts, and necessary uses in producing our assurance; which I will show you distinctly.

1. To the Spirit belong these particulars. 1. He hath indicted those Scriptures which contain the promise of our pardon and salvation. 2. He giveth us the habit or power of believing. 3. He helpeth us also to believe actually, that the word is true, and to receive Christ and the privileges offered in the promise. 4. He worketh in us those graces, and exciteth those gracious acts with us, which are the evidences^k or marks of our interest to pardon and life: he helpeth us to perform those acts which God hath made to be the condition of pardon and glory. 5. He helpeth us to feel and discover these acts in ourselves. 6. He helpeth us to compare them with the rule, and finding out their qualifications, to judge of their sincerity and acceptation with God. 7. He helpeth our reason to conclude rightly of our state from our acts. He enliveneth and heighteneth our apprehension in these particulars, that our assurance may accordingly be strong and lively. 8. He exciteth our joy, and filleth with comfort (when he pleaseth) upon this assurance. None of all these could we perform well of ourselves.

2. The part which the Scripture hath in this work, is, 1. It affordeth us the major proposition, that whosoever believeth sincerely shall be saved." 2. It is the rule by which our acts must be tried, that we may judge of their moral truth.

3. The part that knowledge hath in it, is to know that the foresaid proposition is written in Scripture.

4. The work of faith is to believe the truth of that Scripture, and to be the matter of one of our chief evidences.

5. Our holiness, and true faith, as they are marks and evidences, are the very medium of our argument, from which we conclude.

6. Our conscience and internal sense do acquaint us with both the being and qualifications of our inward acts, which are this medium, and which are called marks.

^k I use the word 'evidence' all along in the vulgar sense as the same with 'sigus,' and not in the proper sense as the schools do.

7. Our reason, or discourse, is necessary to form the argument, and raise the conclusion from the premises ; and to compare our acts with the rule, and judge of the sincerity, &c.

So that you see our assurance is not an effect of any one single cause alone.¹ And so neither merely of faith, by signs, nor by the Spirit.

From all this you may gather,^m 1. What the seal of the Spirit is, to wit, the works or fruits of the Spirit in us. 2. What the testimony of the Spirit is, (for if it be not some of the fore-mentioned acts, I yet know it not). 3. What the testimony of conscience is.

And, if I be not mistaken, the testimony of the Spirit, and the testimony of conscience, are two concurrent testimonies, or causes, to produce one and the same effect, and to afford the premises to the same conclusion, and then to raise our joy thereupon ; so that they may well be said to witness together. Not one laying down the entire conclusion of itself, “ that we are the children of God ;” and then the other attesting the same entirely again of itself : but as concurrent causes to the same numerical conclusion.

But this with submission to better judgments and further search.

By this also you may see, that the common distinction of certainty of adherence, and certainty of evidence, must be taken with a grain or two of salt.ⁿ For there is no certainty without evidence, any more than there is a conclusion without a medium. A small degree of certainty hath some small glimpse of evi-

¹ Therefore, that saying of Cajetan is not so much to be valued, as by some of our divines it is. Certitudine fidei quilibet scit certò se habere donum infusum fidei, idque absque formidine alterius partis. Except he take *certitudo fidei* in a very large, improper sense.

^m Read Gataker's ‘ Shadows without Substance,’ pp. 83, 84, who opens this solidly, as he useth in other things. Sed cave de doctrina quam plurimorum theologorum, qui testimonium Spiritus Sancti intelligunt esse per specierum infusionem, et non per intellectus emendativam illuminationem. Ita vir alioquin magnus, Chamierus, tom. 3, lib. xiii. c. 17. s. 5. ait, haud tute, Hoc (Sp. testimonium) dico esse verbum Dei. Et ita appellari in Scripturis : in quibus revelationes illæ, quæ fiebant prophetis, per internum et arcanum motum Spiritus perpetuo appellantur nomine verbi Dei : nec differebat ab ista energia modo : quia, viz. in prophetis erat extraordinarius, at in fidelibus ordinarius. But you may most clearly see the nature of the Spirit's testimony in the most excellent discourses of two learned men in another case, i. e. Rob. Baron, ‘ Apol.’ p. 733 ; and Amyraldus in ‘ Thes. Sal.’ vol. i. p. 122.

ⁿ The distinctions used in the schools, of *certitudo fidei* and *certitudo evidentie*, I deny not : but that hath a quite different sense from this as it is used.

dence. Indeed, 1. The assent to the truth of a promise: 2. And the acceptation of Christ offered with his benefits, are both before and without any sight or consideration of evidence, and are themselves our best evidence,^o being that faith which is the condition of our justification; but before any man can, in the least assurance, conclude that he is the child of God, and justified, he must have some assurance of that mark or evidence. For who can conclude absolutely that he will receive the thing contained in a conditional promise, till he know that he hath performed the condition? For those that say, 'There is no condition of the new covenant,' I think them not worthy a word of confutation.

And for their assertion,^p "that we are bound immediately to believe that we are justified, and in special favour with God;" it is such as no man of competent knowledge in the Scripture, and belief of its truth, can once imagine. For if every man must believe this, then most must believe a lie, for they shall never be justified, yea, all must at first believe a lie; for they are not justified till they believe; and the believing that they are justified, is not the faith that justifieth them. If only some men must believe this, how should it be known who they be? The truth is, that we are justified, is not properly to be believed at all; for nothing is to be believed which is not written: but it is nowhere written that you or I am justified: only one of these premises is written, from whence we may draw the conclusion, that we are justified, if so be that our own hearts do afford us the other of the premises. So that our actual justification is not a matter of mere faith, but a conclusion from faith and conscience together. If God have nowhere promised to any man justification immediately, without condition, then no man can believe it: but God hath nowhere promised it abso-

^o Therefore I say not that our first comfort, much less our justification, is procured by the sight of evidences; but our assurance is.

^p Their common error, 'that justifying faith is nothing else but a persuasion, more or less, of the love of God to us,' is the root of this and many more mistakes. To justify us, and to assure us that we are justified, are quite different things, and procured by different ways, and at several times usually. *Pessime etiam doctiss. Keckerm. 'System. Theol.' lib. iii. c. 7. s. 7. asserit, Quod statim eo momento quo absolutio ejusmodi sit, cordibus electorum Deus immittit Nuncium illum sententiæ latæ, viz. Spiritum Sanctum, qui eos de gratia Dei certos reddat, atque ita conscientiæ pacem ipsis conciliat. Ita et p. 417, seq. Et eodem modo plurimi transmarin. theolog. Vid. Aquin. ad 1. sent. dist. 15. art. 1—3. q. 112, et Scotum ad 3.; sent. dist. 23. q. unica. Bonavent. 1. sent. q. 17. Biel in 2. sent. dist. 27. q. 3.*

lutely ; therefore, &c. Nor hath he declared to any man, that is not first a believer, that he loveth him with any more than a common love ; therefore, no more can be believed but a common love to any such. For the eternal love and election are manifest to no man before he is a believer.

Sect. IV. 2. Having thus showed you what examination is, and what assurance is, I come to the second thing promised, to show you, that such an infallible certainty of salvation may be attained, and ought to be laboured for, though a perfect certainty cannot here be attained : and that examination is the means to attain it. In which I shall be the briefer, because many writers against the papists on this point, have said enough already.⁹ Yet somewhat I will say : 1. Because it is the common conceit of the ignorant vulgar, that an infallible certainty cannot be attained. 2. And many have taught and printed that it is only the testimony of the Spirit that can assure us ; and that this proving our justification by our sanctification, and searching after marks and signs in ourselves for the procuring of assurance, is a dangerous and deceitful way. Thus we have the papists, the antinomians, and the ignorant vulgar, conspiring against this doctrine of assurance and examination. Which I maintain against them by these arguments.

1. Scripture tells us we may know, and that the saints before us have known their justification, and future salvation. (2 Cor. v. 1 ; Rom. viii. 36 ; John xxi. 15 ; 1 John v. 19, iv. 14, iii. 14—24, and ii. 3—5 ; Rom. viii. 14, 19, 36 ; Eph. iii. 12.) I refer you to the places for brevity.

2. If we may be certain of the premises, then may we also be certain of the undeniable conclusion of them. But here we may be certain of both the premises. For, 1. "That whosoever believeth in Christ shall not perish, but shall have everlasting life," is the voice of the Gospel ; and therefore that we may be sure of ; that we are such believers, may be known by conscience and internal sense. I know all the question is this, whether the moral truth, or sincerity of our faith, and other

⁹ Yet I believe that their divines have some of them made the difference betwixt us and the papists seem wider than it is, as do these words of one of them : *Ex hoc unico articulo quantumvis minuto à plerisque reputari queat, universus papatus et Lutheranismus dependet. Martinus Eisengrenius initio 'Apol. de Cer. Salv.'* And so have some of our divines on the other side, as Luther in Gen. 41. *Etiamsi nihil præterea peccatum esset in doctrina pontificia, justas habemus causas cur ab ecclesia infideli nos sejungeremus.*

graces, can be known thus or not? And that it may, I prove thus :

1. From the natural use of this conscience, and internal sense, which is to acquaint us not only with the being, but the qualifications of the acts of our souls. All voluntary motions are sensible, and though the heart is so deceitful, that no man can certainly know the heart of another, and with much difficulty clearly know his own; yet, by diligent observation and examination, known they may be; for though our inward sense and conscience may be depraved, yet not extirpated, or quite extinguished.

2. The commands of believing, repenting, &c., were in vain, especially as the condition of the covenant, if we could not know whether we perform them or not.

3. The Scripture would never make such a wide difference between the godly and the wicked, the children of God and the children of the devil, and set forth the happiness of the one and the misery of the other so largely, and make this difference to run through all the veins of its doctrine, if a man cannot know which of these two estates he is in.

4. Much less would the Holy Ghost bid us "give all diligence to make our calling and election sure, if it could not be done." (2 Pet. i. 10.) And that this is not meant of objective certainty, but of the subjective, appeareth in this; that the apostle mentioneth not salvation, or any thing to come, but calling and election, which to believers were objectively certain before, as being both past.

5. And to what purpose should we be so earnestly urged to examine, and prove, and try ourselves, whether we be in the faith, and whether Christ be in us, or we be reprobates? (1 Cor. xi. 28, and 2 Cor. xiii. 5.) Why should we search for that which cannot be found?

6. How can we obey those precepts which require us to rejoice always? (1 Thess. v. 16 :) To call God our Father: (Luke xi. 12 :) To live in his praises: (Psalm xlix. 1—5 :) And to long for Christ's coming: (Rev. xxii. 17, 20; 1 Thess. i. 10 :) and to comfort ourselves with the mention of it: (2 Thess. iv. 18 :) which are all the consequents of assurance. Who can do any of these heartily, that is not in some measure sure that he is the child of God?

7. There are some duties that either the saints only, or chiefly, are commanded to perform; and how shall that be done,

if we cannot know that we are saints? (Psalm cxliv. 5, cxxxii. 9, xxx. 4, xxxi. 23, &c.)

Thus I have proved that a certainty may be attained; an infallible, though not a perfect certainty: such as excludeth deceit, though it excludeth not all degrees of doubting. If Bellarmine, by his conjectural certainty, do mean this infallible though imperfect certainty, (as I doubt he doth not,) then I would not much contend with him: and I acknowledge that it is not properly a certainty of mere faith, but mixed.

Sect. V. 3. The third thing that I promised, is, to show you what are the hinderances which keep men from examination and assurance. I shall, 1. Show what hinders them from trying. And, 2. What hindereth them from knowing, when they do try, that so when you see the impediments, you may avoid them.

And, 1. We cannot doubt but Satan will do his part, to hinder us from such a necessary duty as this: if all the power he hath can do it, or all the means and instruments which he can raise up, he will be sure above all duties to keep you off from this. He is loth the godly should have that joy, and assurance, and advantage, against corruption, which the faithful performance of self-examination would procure them. And for the ungodly, he knows, if they should once fall close to this examining task, they would find out his deceits, and their own danger, and so be very likely to escape him; if they did but faithfully perform this duty, he were likely to lose most of the subjects of his kingdom. How could he get so many millions to hell willingly, if they knew they went thither? And how could they choose but know, if they did thoroughly try, having such a clear light, and sure rule in the Scripture, to discover it? If the beast did know that he is going to the slaughter, he would not be driven so easily to it, but would strive for his life before he comes to die, as well as he doth at the time of his death. If Balaam had seen as much of the danger as his ass, instead of his driving on so furiously, he would have been as loth to proceed as he. If the Syrians had known whither they were going, as well as Elisha did, they would have stopped before they found themselves in the hands of their enemies. (2 Kings vi. 19, 20.) So, if sinners did but know whither they were hasting, they would stop before they are engulfed in damnation. If every swearer, drunkard, whoremonger, lover of the world, or unre-

generate person whatsoever, did certainly know that the way he is in, will never bring him to heaven, and that if he die in it, he shall undoubtedly perish, Satan could never get him to proceed so resolutely. Alas ! he would then think every day a year till he were out of the danger ; and whether he were eating, drinking, working, or whatever he were doing, the thoughts of his danger would be still in his mind, and this voice would be still in his ears, “ Except thou repent and be converted, thou shalt surely perish.” The devil knows well enough, that if he cannot keep men from trying their states, and knowing their misery, he shall hardly be able to keep them from repentance and salvation. And, therefore, he deals with them as Jael with Sisera ; she gives him fair words, and food, and layeth him to sleep, and covereth his face, and then she comes upon him softly, and strikes the nail into his temples. (Judges iv. 19.) And as the Philistines with Sampson, who first put out his eyes, and then made him grind in their mills. (Judges xvi. 21.) If the pit be not covered, who but the blind will fall into it ? If the snare be not hid, the bird will escape it : Satan knows how to angle for souls better than to show them the hook or line, and to fright them away with a noise, or with his own appearance.

Therefore, he labours to keep them from a searching ministry ; or to keep the minister from helping them to search ; or to take off the edge of the word, that it may not pierce and divide ; or to turn away their thoughts, or to possess them with prejudice. Satan is acquainted with all the preparations and studies of the minister ; he knows when he hath provided a searching sermon, fitted to the state and necessity of a hearer ; and therefore he will keep him away that day, if it be possible, above all, or else cast him asleep, or steal away the word by the cares and talk of the world, or some way prevent its operation, and the sinner’s obedience.

This is the first hinderance.

Sect. VI. Wicked men also are great impediments to poor sinners when they should examine and discover their estates.

1. Their examples hinder much.^r When an ignorant sinner

^r At hic tritissima quæque via et celeberrima maxime decipit. Nihil ergo magis præstandum est, quam ne pecorum ritu sequamur antecedentium gregem, pergentes non qua eundum est, sed qua itur. Nulla res nos majoribus malis implicat, quam quod ad rumorem componimur ; optima rati ea, quæ magno assensu recepta sunt, quorumcunque exempla multa sunt : nec ad rationem, sed ad similitudinem vivimus. Inde ista tanta coacervatio aliorum super alios ruentium. Quod in strage hominum magna evenit, cum ipse se

seeth all his friends and neighbours do as he doth, and live quietly in the same state with himself; yea, the rich and learned as well as others, this is an exceeding great temptation to him to proceed in his security. 2. Also, the merry company, and pleasant discourse of these men, doth take away the thoughts of his spiritual state, and doth make the understanding drunk with their sensual delight: so that if the Spirit had before put into them any jealousy of themselves, or any purpose to try themselves, this jovial company doth soon quench them all. 3. Also, their continual discourse of nothing but matters of the world, doth damp all these purposes for self-trying, and make them forgotten. 4. Their railings also, and scorning at godly persons, is a very great impediment to multitudes of souls, and possesseth them with such a prejudice and dislike of the way to heaven, that they settle resolvedly in the way that they are in.^s 5. Also, their constant persuasions, allurements, threats, &c., hinder much. God doth scarcely ever open the eyes of a poor sinner, to see that all is nought with him, and his way is wrong, but presently there is a multitude of Satan's apostles ready to flatter him, and daub, and deceive, and settle him again in the quiet possession of his former master. 'What,' say they, 'do you make a doubt of your salvation, who have lived so well, and done nobody harm, and been beloved of all? God is merciful: and if such as you shall not be saved, God help a great many: what do you think is become of all your forefathers: and what will become of all your friends and neighbours that live as you do: will they all be damned; shall none be saved, think you, but a few strict precisians? Come, come, if ye hearken to these books or preachers, they will drive you to despair shortly, or drive you out of your wits: they must have something to say: they would have all like themselves: are not all men sinners; and did not Christ die to save sinners? Never trouble your head with these thoughts, but believe and you shall do well.'^t Thus do they follow the soul that is escaping from Satan, with restless cries, till they have brought

populus premit, nemo ita cadit, ut non alium in se attrahat; primi exitio sequentibus sunt. Nemo sibi tantum errat, sed alieni erroris causa et autor est.—*Seneca de Vita Beat.* c. 1.

^s Read on this subject Mr. Young's books, which handle it fully.

^t Omnem operam dedi, ut me multitudini educerem, et aliqua dote notabilem facerem. Quid aliud quam telis me opposui, et malevolentiae quod morderet ostendi?—*Seneca de Vita Beat.* c. 2. You see among the very heathens goodness had still the most enemies.

him back : oh, how many thousands have such charms kept asleep in deceit and security, till death and hell have awakened and better informed them ! The Lord calls to the sinner, and tells him, “ The gate is strait, the way is narrow, and few find it : try and examine whether thou be in the faith or no : give all diligence to make sure in time.” (Luke xiii. 24 ; 2 Cor. xiii. 5 ; 2 Pet. i. 10.) And the world cries out clean contrary, never doubt, never trouble yourselves with these thoughts : I entreat the sinner that is in this strait, to consider, that it is Christ, and not their fathers, or mothers, or neighbours, or friends, that must judge them at last ; and if Christ condemn them, these cannot save them : and therefore common reason may tell them, that it is not from the words of ignorant men, but from the word of God, that they must fetch their comforts and hopes of salvation. When Ahab would inquire among the multitudes of flattering prophets, it was his death. They can flatter men into the snare, but they cannot tell how to bring them out. Oh, take the counsel of the Holy Ghost, “ Let no man deceive you with vain words : for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience : be not ye therefore partakers with them ;” (Ephes. v. 6, 7 ;) and, “ Save yourselves from this untoward generation.” (Acts ii. 40.)

3. But the greatest hinderances are in men’s own hearts.

Sect. VII. 1. Some are so ignorant that they know not what self-examination is, nor what a minister means when he persuadeth them to try themselves ; or they know not that there is any necessity of it ; but think every man is bound to believe ^a that God is his Father, and that his sins are pardoned, whether it be true or false ; and that it were a great fault to make any question of it ; or, they do not think that assurance can be attained ; or, that there is any such great difference betwixt one man and another ; but that we are all Christians, and therefore need not to trouble ourselves any further ; or, at least, they know not wherein the difference lies, nor how to set upon the searching of their hearts, nor to find out its secret motions, and to judge accordingly. They have as gross conceits of that regeneration, which they must search for, as Nicodemus had. (John

^a Or, as Mr. Saltmarsh saith, every man is bound to believe, but no man to question, whether he believe or not.—pp. 92, 93. And this faith, he saith, is being persuaded more or less of Christ’s love.—p. 94. So that by this doctrine every man is bound to believe that Christ loveth him, and not to question his belief ; if it were only Christ’s common love, he might thus believe it, but a special love to him is nowhere written.

iii. 5.) And when they should try whether the Spirit be in them, they are like those that "knew not whether there were a Holy Ghost to be received or no." (Acts xix. 2.)

2. Some are such infidels that they will not believe that ever God will make such a difference betwixt men in the life to come, and therefore will not search themselves whether they differ here: though judgment and resurrection be in their creed, yet they are not in their faith.

3. Some are so dead-hearted, that they perceive not how nearly it doth concern them; let us say what we can to them, they lay it not to heart, but give us the hearing, and there is an end.

4. Some are so possessed with self-love and pride, that they will not so much as suspect any such danger to themselves. Like a proud tradesman, who scorns the motion when his friends desire him to cast up his books, because they are afraid he will break. As some fond parents, that have an over-weening conceit of their own children, and therefore will not believe or hear any evil of them. Such a fond self-love doth hinder men from suspecting and trying their states.

5. Some are so guilty that they dare not try. They are so fearful that they shall find their states unsound, that they dare not search into them: and yet they dare venture them to a more dreadful trial.

6. Some are far in love with their sin, and so far in dislike with the way of God, that they dare not fall on the trial of their ways, lest they be forced from the course which they love to that which they loathe.

7. Some are so resolved already never to change their present state, that they neglect examination as a useless thing. Before they will turn so precise, and seek a new way, when they have lived so long, and gone so far, they will put their eternal state to the venture, come of it what will. And when a man is fully resolved to hold on his way, and not to turn back, be it right or wrong, to what end should he inquire whether he be right or not?

8. Most men are so taken up with their worldly affairs, and are so busy in driving the trade of providing for the flesh, that they cannot set themselves to the trying of their title to heaven. They have another kind of happiness in their eye, which they are pursuing, which will not suffer them to make sure of heaven.

9. Most men are so clogged with a laziness and slothfulness of spirit, that they will not be persuaded to be at the pains of an hour's examination of their own hearts. It requireth some labour and diligence to accomplish it thoroughly, and they will rather venture all than set about it.

10. But the common and dangerous impediment is that false faith and hope, commonly called presumption, which bears up the hearts of the most of the world, and so keeps them from suspecting their danger.

Thus you see what abundance of difficulties must be overcome before a man can closely set upon the examining of his heart. I do but name them for brevity sake.

And if a man do break through all these impediments, and set upon the duty, yet assurance is not presently attained. Of those few who do inquire after marks and means of assurance, and bestow some pains to learn the difference between the sound Christian and the unsound, and look often into their own hearts; yet divers are deceived, and do miscarry, especially through these following causes :

1. There is such a confusion and darkness in the soul of man, especially of an unregenerate man, that he can scarcely tell what he doeth, or what is in him. As one can hardly find any thing in an house where nothing keeps his place, but all is cast on a heap together : so is it in the heart where all things are in disorder, especially when darkness is added to this disorder : so that the heart is like an obscure cave or dungeon, where there is but a little crevice of light, and a man must rather grope than see. No wonder if men mistake in searching such a heart, and so miscarry in judging of their estate.

2. And the rather, because most men do accustom themselves to be strangers at home, and are little taken up with observing the temper and motions of their own hearts. All their studies are employed without them, and they are nowhere less acquainted than in their own breasts.

3. Besides, many come to the work with forestalling conclusions : they are resolved what to judge before they try : they use the duty but to strengthen their present conceits of themselves, and not to find out the truth of their condition, like a bribed judge, who examines each party as if he would judge uprightly, when he is resolved which way the cause shall go beforehand. Or, as perverse disputers, who argue only to maintain their present opinions rather than to try those opinions

whether they are right or wrong. Just so do men examine their hearts.

4. Also, men are partial in their own cause. They are ready to think their great sins small, and their small sins to be none; their gifts of nature to be the work of grace, and their gifts of common grace to be the special grace of the saints. They are straightway ready to say, "All these have I kept from my youth; and I am rich and increased," &c. (Matt. xix. 20; Rev. iii. 17.) The first common excellency that they meet with in themselves, doth so dazzle their eyes, that they are presently satisfied that all is well, and look no further.

5. Besides, most men do search but by the halves.^x If it will not easily and quickly be done, they are discouraged, and leave off. Few set to it, and follow it, as beseems them in a work of such moment. He must give all diligence that means to make sure.

6. Also, men try themselves by false marks and rules, not knowing wherein the truth of Christianity doth consist; some looking beyond, and some short of the scripture standard.

7. Moreover, there is so great likeness between the lowest degree of special grace, and the highest degree of common grace, that it is no wonder if the unskilful be mistaken. It is a great question, whether the main difference between special grace and common be not rather gradual than specific. If it should be so, as some think, then the discovery will be much more difficult. However, to discern by what principle our affections are moved, and to what ends, and with what sincerity, is not very easy; there being so many wrong ends and motives, which may excite the like acts. Every grace in the saints hath its counterfeit in the hypocrite.

8. Also, men try themselves by unsafe marks; either looking for a high degree of grace, instead of a lower degree in sincerity, as many doubting Christians do: or else inquiring only into their outward actions, or into their inward affections, without their ends, motives, and other qualifications; the sure evidences are, faith, love, &c., which are essential parts of our Christianity, and that lie nearest to the heart.

9. Lastly: Men frequently miscarry in this working, by setting

^x I doubt not but a Protestant, upon a dogmatical faith or belief of his tenets and principles, might, among Papists, die upon them, and yet come far short of salvation. How far would the name of Abraham have carried a Jew, in letter?—*Mr. Vines' Sermons*, Numb. xiv. 24. p. 29.

on it in their own strength. As some expect the Spirit should do it without them, so others attempt it themselves, without seeking or expecting the help of the Spirit. Both these will certainly miscarry in their assurance. How far the Spirit's assistance is necessary, is showed before, and the several acts which it must perform for us.

CHAP. VIII.

Further Causes of Doubting among Christians.

SECT. I. Because the comfort of a Christian's life doth so much consist in his assurance of God's special love, and because the right way of obtaining it is so much controverted of late, I will here proceed a little further in opening to you some other hinderances which keep true Christians from comfortable certainty, besides the fore-mentioned errors in the work of examination: though I would still have you remember and be sensible, that the neglect or slighty performance of that great duty, and not following on the search with seriousness and constancy, is the most common hinderance for aught I have yet found.

I shall now add these ten more, which I find very ordinary impediments, and therefore desire Christians more carefully to consider and beware of them.

1. One common and great cause of doubting and uncertainty is, the weakness and small measure of our grace. A little grace is next to none: small things are hardly discerned. He that will see a small needle, a hair, a mote, or atom, must have clear light and good eyes; but houses, and towns, and mountains, are easily discerned. Most Christians content themselves with a small measure of grace, and do not follow on to spiritual strength and manhood. They believe so weakly, and love God so little, that they can scarce find whether they believe and love at all; like a man in a swoon, whose pulse and breathing is so weak and obscure that it can hardly be perceived whether they move at all, and consequently whether the man be alive or dead.

The chief remedy for such, would be to follow on their duty, till their graces be increased. Ply your work; wait upon God in the use of his prescribed means, and he will

undoubtedly bless you with increase and strength. Oh! that Christians would bestow most of that time in getting grace, which they bestow in anxious doubtings whether they have any or none; and that they would lay out those serious affections in praying, and seeking to Christ for more grace, which they bestow in fruitless complaints of their supposed gracelessness! I beseech thee, Christian, take this advice as from God; and then, when thou believest strongly, and lovest fervently, thou canst not doubt whether thou do believe and love or not, any more than a man that is burning hot can doubt whether he be warm; or a man that is strong and lusty can doubt whether he be alive. Strong affections will make you feel them. Who loveth his friends, or wife, or child, or any thing strongly, and doth not know it? A great measure of grace is seldom doubted of; or, if it be, you may quickly find when you seek and try.

Sect. II. Another cause of uncomfortable living is, that Christians look more at their present cause of comfort or discomfort, than they do at their future happiness, and the way to attain it.² They look after signs which may tell them what they are, more than they do at precepts which tell them what they should do. They are very desirous to know whether they are justified and beloved, or not; but they do not think what course they should take to be justified, if they be not; as if their present case must needs be their everlasting case, and if they be now unpardoned, there were no remedy. Why, I beseech thee, consider this, O doubting soul! What, if all were as bad as thou dost fear, and none of thy sins were yet pardoned; is not the remedy at hand? May not all this be done in a moment? Dost thou not know that thou mayest have Christ and pardon whenever thou wilt? Call not this a loose or strange doctrine. Christ is willing if thou be willing. He offereth himself and all his benefits to thee: he presseth them on thee, and urgeth thee to accept them. He will condemn thee, and destroy thee, if thou wilt not accept them. Why dost thou,

² You sit poring and searching for pillars of hope within you, and bestow much pains to answer your own fears: but the ready way to make the business clear, is by going to Christ. Stand not so much as upon this question, Whether you have believed in truth or not; but put all out of doubt by a present faith. The door is open, enter and live; you may more easily build a new fabric of comfort, by taking Christ, than repair your old dwelling, and clear all suits that are brought against your tenure.—*Simonds' Deserted Soul*, p. 554.

therefore, stand whining and complaining that thou art not pardoned and adopted, when thou shouldst take them, being offered thee? Were he not mad that would lie weeping, and wringing his hands, because he is not pardoned, when his prince stands by all the while offering him a pardon, and entreating, and threatening, and persuading, and correcting him, and all to make him take it? What would you say to such a man; would you not chide him for his folly, and say, ‘If thou wouldst have pardon and life, why dost thou not take it?’ Why, then, do you not say the like to yourselves? Know ye not that pardon and adoption are offered you only on the condition of your believing? And this believing is nothing else but the accepting of Christ for thy Lord and Saviour, as he is offered to thee with his benefits in the Gospel: and this accepting is principally, if not only, the act of thy will. So that if thou be willing to have Christ upon his own terms, that is, to save and rule thee, then thou art a believer: thy willingness is thy faith; and if thou have faith, thou hast the surest of all evidences. Justifying faith is not thy persuasion of God’s special love to thee, or of thy justification, but thy accepting Christ to make thee just and lovely. It may be, thou wilt say, ‘I cannot believe; it is not so easy a matter to believe as you make it.’

Ans. Indeed, to those that are not willing, it is not easy, God only can make them willing. But to him that is willing to have Christ for King and Saviour, I will not say, believing is easy: but it is already performed; for this is believing. Let me, therefore, put this question to every doubting, complaining soul, What is it that thou art complaining and mourning for? What makes thee walk so sadly as thou dost? Because thou hast not Christ and his benefits? Why, art thou willing to have them on the fore-mentioned condition, or art thou not? If thou be willing, thou hast him: thy accepting is thy believing: “To as many as receive him, (that is, accept him,) to them he gives power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.” (John i. 12.) But if thou art not willing, why dost thou complain? Methinks the tongue should follow the bent of the heart or will, and they that would not have Christ should be speaking against him, at least, against his laws and ways, and not complaining because they do not enjoy him. Dost thou groan, and make such moan for want of that which thou wouldst not have? If, indeed, thou wouldst not have Christ for thy King and Saviour, then have I nothing to say but to persuade

thee to be willing. Is it not madness, then, to lie complaining that we have not Christ, when we may have him if we will? If thou have him not, take him, and cease thy complaints. Thou canst not be so forward and willing as he is: and if he be willing, and thou be willing, who shall break the match? I will not say, as Mr. Saltmarsh most horribly doth,^a that we ought no more to question our faith, which is our first and foundation grace, than we ought to question Christ the foundation of our faith. But this, I say, that it were a more wise and direct course to accept Christ offered, which is believing, than to spend so much time in doubting whether we have Christ and faith, or no.

Sect. III. Another cause of many Christians' trouble, is their mistaking assurance for the joy that sometime accompanieth it; or, at least, confounding them together.^b Therefore, when they want the joy of assurance, they are as much cast down as if they wanted assurance itself. Dr. Sibbs saith well, that as we cannot have grace but by the work of the Spirit, so must there be a further act to make us know that we have that grace: and when we know we have grace, yet must there be a further act of the Spirit to give us comfort in that knowledge. Some knowledge or assurance of our regenerate and justified state the Spirit gives more ordinarily, but that sensible joy is more seldom and extraordinary. We have cause enough to keep off doubtings and distress of Spirit, upon the bare sight of our evidences, though we do not feel any further joys. These complaining souls understand not: and therefore, though they cannot deny their willingness to have Christ, nor many other the like graces, which are infallible signs of their justification and adoption; yet, because they do not feel their spirits replenished with comforts, they throw away all, as if they had nothing. As if a child should no longer take himself for a son than he sees the smiles of his father's face, or heareth the comfortable expressions of his mouth; and as if the father did cease to be a father whenever he ceaseth those smiles and speeches.

Sect. IV. 4. And yet, further, is the trouble of these poor souls increased, in that they know not the ordinary way of God's conveying these expected comforts.^c When they hear that they

^a Flowing of Christ's blood, &c.—p. 95.

^b Mr. Paul Bayn (I think one of the holiest, choicest men that ever England bred) yet describeth the temper of his spirit thus: I thank God in Christ, sustentation I have, but suavities spiritual I taste not any.—*In his Letters*.

^c In watchfulness and diligence, we sooner meet with comfort, than in idle complaining; our care, therefore, should be to get sound evidence of a good

are the free gifts of the Spirit, they presently conceive themselves to be merely passive therein, and that they have nothing to do but to wait when God will bestow them ; not understanding that though these comforts are spiritual, yet are they rational ; raised upon the understanding's apprehension of the excellency of God our happiness, and of our interest in him ; and by the rolling of this blessed object in our frequent meditations. The Spirit doth advance, and not destroy our reason ; it doth rectify it, and then use it as its ordinary instrument for the conveyance of things to our affections, and exciting them accordingly, and not lay it aside and affect us without it ; therefore, our joys are raised discursively, and the Spirit first revealeth our cause of joy, and then helpeth us to rejoice upon those revealed grounds ; so that he who rejoiceth groundedly, knoweth why he rejoiceth ordinarily. Now these mistaken Christians lie waiting when the Spirit doth cast in these comforts into their hearts, while they sit still and labour not to excite their own affections ; nay, while they reason against the comforts which they wait for. These men must be taught to know, that the matter of their comfort is in the promises ; and thence they must fetch it as oft as they expect it ; and that if they set themselves daily and diligently to meditate of the truth of those promises, and of the real excellency contained in them, and of their own title thereto : in this way they may expect the Spirit's assistance for the raising of holy comfort in their souls.^d But if they lie still, bewailing their want of joy, while the full and free promises lie by them, and never take them, and consider, and look into them, and apply them to their hearts by serious meditation, they may complain for want of comfort long enough before they have it, in God's ordinary way of conveyance. God worketh upon men as men, as reasonable creatures ; the joy of the promises, and the joy of the Holy Ghost, are one joy.

And those seducers, who, in their ignorance, misguide poor souls in this point, do exceedingly wrong them while they persuade them so to expect their comforts from the Spirit, as not to be any authors of them themselves, not to raise up their own hearts by argumentative means ; telling them that such comforts estate, and then to keep those evidences clear.—*D. Sibbs' Preface to Soul's Conflict.*

^d As if a poor man should complain for want of money, when a chest full stands by him, and he may take what he will ; is it not better to take it out, than lie complaining for want ?

are but hammered by themselves, and not the genuine comforts of the Spirit. How contrary is this to the doctrine of Christ !

Sect. V. 5. Another cause of the trouble of their souls is, their expecting a greater measure of assurance than God doth usually bestow upon his people.^e Most think, as long as they have any doubting they have no assurance ; they consider not that there are many degrees of infallible certainty below a perfect or an undoubting certainty. They must know, that while they are here they shall know but in part ; they shall be imperfect in the knowledge of Scripture, which is their rule in trying ; and imperfect in the knowledge of their own obscure, deceitful hearts ; some strangeness to God and themselves there will still remain ; some darkness will overspread the face of their souls ; some unbelief will be making head against their faith ; and some of their grievings of the Spirit, will be grievous to themselves, and make a breach in their peace and joy. Yet, as long as their faith is prevailing, and their assurance doth tread down and subdue their doubtings, though not quite expel them, they may walk in comfort and maintain their peace ; but as long as they are resolved to lie down in sorrow till their assurance be perfect, their days on earth must then be days of sorrow.

Sect. VI. 6. Again, many a soul lies long in trouble, by taking up his comforts in the beginning upon unsound or uncertain grounds.^f This may be the case of a gracious soul, who hath better grounds and doth not see them ; and then when they grow to more ripeness of understanding, and come to find out the insufficiency of their former grounds of comfort, they cast away their comfort wholly, when they should only cast away their rotten props of it, and search for better to support it with. As if their comfort and their safety were both of a nature, and

^e God will keep the rich store of consistent and abiding comforts till the great day, that when all the family shall come together, he may pour out the fulness of his hidden treasures on them ; we are now in the morning of the day, the feast is to come ; a breakfast must serve to stay the stomach, till the King of saints, with all his friends, sit down together.—*Simonds' Deserted Soul*, p. 507.

^f So some think they are God's people, because they are of such a party, or such a strict opinion, and when they change their opinion they change their comfort. Some that could have no comfort while they were among the orthodox, as soon as they have turned to such or such a sect, have comfort in abundance ; partly through Satan's delusion, and partly because they think their change in opinion hath set them right with God ; and therefore they rejoice. So, many hypocrites, whose religion lieth only in their opinions, have their comfort also only there.

both built on the same foundation, they conclude against their safety, because they have discovered the mistake of their former comfort. And there are many much-applauded books and teachers of late, who further the delusion of poor souls in this point, and make them believe that because their former comforts were too legal, and their persuasions of their good state were ill grounded, therefore themselves were under the covenant of works only, and their spiritual condition as unsound as their comforts. These men observe not, that while they deny us the use of marks to know our own state, yet they make use of them themselves, to know the states of others; yea, and of false and insufficient marks too: for to argue from the motive of our persuasion of a good state, to the goodness or badness of that state, is no sound arguing. It followeth not that a man is unregenerate because he judged himself regenerate upon wrong grounds: for perhaps he might have better grounds, and not know it; or else, not know which were good and which bad. Safety and comfort stand not always on the same bottom. Bad grounds do prove the assurance bad which was built upon them, but not always the state bad. These teachers do but toss poor souls up and down as the waves of the sea, making them believe that their state is altered as oft as their conceits of it alter. Alas! few Christians do come to know either what are solid grounds of comfort, or whether they have any such grounds themselves, in the infancy of Christianity. But as an infant hath life before he knoweth it; and as he hath misapprehensions of himself, and most other things, for certain years together, and yet it will not follow, that therefore he hath no life or reason; so it is in the case in hand. Yet this should persuade both ministers and believers themselves, to lay right grounds for their comfort, in the beginning, as far as may be; for else, usually when they find the flaw in their comforts and assurance, they will judge it to be a flaw in their safety and real states. Just, as I observe, most persons do, who turn to errors or heresies; they took up the truth in the beginning, upon either false or doubtful grounds, and then, when their grounds are overthrown or shaken, they think the doctrine is also overthrown; and so they let go both together, as if none had solid arguments because they had not; or none could manage them better than they. Even so when they perceive that their arguments for their good state were unsound, they think that their state must needs be as unsound.

Sect. VII. 7. Moreover, many a soul lieth long under doubting, through the great imperfection of their very reason, and exceeding weakness of their natural parts. Grace doth usually rather turn our parts to their most necessary use, and employ our faculties on better objects, than add to the degree of their natural strength. Many honest hearts have such weak heads, that they know not how to perform the work of self-trial; they are not able, rationally, to argue the case; they will acknowledge the premises, and yet deny the apparent conclusion; or, if they be brought to acknowledge the conclusion, yet they do but fluctuate and stagger in their concession, and hold it so weakly, that every assault may take it from them. If God do not some other way supply to these men the defect of their reason, I see not how they should have clear and settled peace.

Sect. VIII. 8. Another great and too common cause of doubting and discomfort, is the secret maintaining of some known sin. When a man liveth in some unwarrantable practice, and God hath oft touched him for it, and conscience is galled, and yet he continueth it, it is no wonder if this person want both assurance and comfort.^s One would think, that a soul that lieth under the fears of wrath, and is so tender, as to tremble and complain, should be as tender of sinning, and scarcely adventure upon the appearance of evil. And yet, sad experience tells us that it is frequently otherwise: I have known too many such, that would complain, and yet sin; and accuse themselves, and yet sin still; yea, and despair, and yet proceed in sinning; and all arguments and means could not keep them from the wilful committing of that sin again and again, which yet they themselves did think would prove their destruction. Yea, some will be carried away with those sins which seem most contrary to their dejected temper. I have known them that would fill men's ears with the constant lamentations of their miserable state, and despairing accusations against themselves, as if they had been the most humble people in the world; and yet be as passionate in the maintaining their innocence, when another

^s Read Bishop Hall's Soliloquy, 61. p. 239, called 'The Sting of Guiltiness.' When men dally with sin, and will be playing with snares and baits, and allow a secret liberty in the heart to sin, conniving at many workings of it, and not setting upon mortification with earnest endeavours; though they be convinced, yet they are not persuaded to rise with all their might against the Lord's enemies, but do his work negligently, which is an accursed thing; for this God casteth them upon sore straits.—*Simonds' Deserted Soul*, &c. pp. 521, 522.

accuseth them; and as intolerably peevish, and tender of their own reputation in any thing they are blamed for, as if they were the proudest persons on earth; still denying or extenuating every disgraceful fault that they are charged with.

This cherishing of sin^h doth hinder assurance these four ways: 1. It doth abate the degree of our graces, and so make them more undiscernible. 2. It obscureth that which it destroyeth not; for it beareth such sway, that grace is not in action, nor seen to stir, nor scarce heard to speak, for the noise of this corruption. 3. It putteth out, or dimmeth the eye of the soul, that it cannot see its own condition; and it benumbeth and stupifieth that it cannot feel its own case. 4. But especially, it provoketh God to withdraw himself, his comforts, and the assistance of the Spirit, without which, we may search long enough before we have assurance. God hath made a separation betwixt sin and peace; though they may consist together in remiss degrees, yet so much as sin prevaieth in the soul, so much will the peace of that soul be defective. As long as thou dost favour or cherish thy pride and self-esteem, thy aspiring projects and love of the world, thy secret lust, and pleasing desires of the flesh, or any the like unchristian practice, thou expectest assurance and comfort in vain. God will not encourage thee, by his precious gifts, in a course of sinning. This worm will be crawling and gnawing upon thy conscience; it will be a fretting, devouring canker to thy consolations. Thou mayst steal a spark of false comfort from thy worldly prosperity or delight; or thou mayst have it from some false opinions, or from the delusions of Satan; but from God thou wilt have no more comfort, than thou makest conscience of sinning. However an Antinomian may tell thee that thy comforts have no such dependence upon thy obedience, nor thy discomforts upon thy disobedience,ⁱ and therefore may speak as much peace to thee in the course of thy sinning as in thy most conscionable

^h Some have disputed whether it be possible for a godly man to be secure in sinning, and more willing to offend, because of God's gracious covenant, which will infallibly rescue him out of that sin! But what sin is not possible, except the sin against the Holy Ghost, even to a regenerate man?—*Mr. Burgess of Justific.* lect. 28. p. 256.

ⁱ Some would have men, after the committing of gross sins, to be presently comfortable, and believe without humbling themselves at all. Indeed, when we are once in Christ, we ought not to question our state in him, &c. But yet a guilty conscience will be clamorous, and full of objections, and God will not speak peace till it be humbled. God will let his children know, what it is to be too bold with sin, &c.—*Dr. Sibbs' Soul's Conflict*, Preface.

walking, yet thou shalt find by experience that God will not do so. If any man set up his idols in his heart, and put the stumbling-block of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to a minister, or to God, to inquire for assurance and comfort, God will answer that man by himself, and instead of comforting him, he will set his face against him: "He will answer him according to the multitude of his idols." Read Ezek. xv. 3—9.

Sect. IX. Another very great and common cause of want of assurance and comfort is, when men grow lazy in the spiritual part of duty, and keep not up their graces in constant and lively action. As Dr. Sibbs saith truly, "It is the lazy Christian commonly that lacketh assurance." The way of painful duty is the way of fullest comfort. Christ carrieth all our comforts in his hand: if we are out of that way where Christ is to be met, we are out of the way where comfort is to be had.

These three ways doth this laziness debar us of our comforts.

1. By stopping the fountain, and causing Christ to withhold this blessing from us.^k Parents use not to smile upon children in their neglects and disobedience. So far as the Spirit is grieved, he will suspend his consolations. Assurance and peace are Christ's great encouragements to faithfulness and obedience: and, therefore, though our obedience do not merit them, yet they usually rise and fall with our diligence in duty. They that have entertained the Antinomian dotages to cover their idleness and viciousness, may talk their nonsense against this at pleasure, but the laborious Christian knows it by experience. As prayer must have faith and fervency to procure its success, besides the blood-shed and intercession of Christ, (James v. 15, 16,) so must all other parts of our obedience. He that will say to us in that triumphing day, "Well done, good and faithful servant, &c., enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," will also encourage his servants in their most affectionate and spiritual duties, and say, "Well done, good and faithful servant, take this foretaste of thy everlasting joy." If thou grow seldom, and customary, and cold in duty, especially in thy secret prayers to God, and yet findest no abatement in thy joys, I cannot but fear that thy joys are either carnal or diabolical.

2. Grace is never apparent and sensible to the soul, but while it is in action; therefore, want of action must needs cause want of assurance. Habits are not felt immediately, but by the freeness and facility of their acts: of the very being of the

^k See Dr. Sibbs' 'Soul's Conflict,' pp. 480, 481.

soul itself, nothing is felt or perceived but only its acts. The fire that lieth still in the flint is neither seen nor felt, but when you smite it, and force it into act, it is easily discerned. The greatest action doth force the greatest observation, whereas the dead and inactive are not remembered or taken notice of. Those that have long lain still in their graves, are out of men's thoughts as well as their sight, but those that walk the streets, and bear rule among them, are noted by all; it is so with our graces. That you have a habit of love or faith, you can no otherwise know but as a consequence by reasoning; but that you have acts, you may know by feeling. If you see a man lie still in the way, what will you do to know whether he be drunk, or in a swoon, or dead? Will you not stir him, or speak to him, to see whether he can go; or feel his pulse, or observe his breath, knowing that where there is life, there is some kind of motion? I earnestly beseech thee, Christian, observe and practise this excellent rule: thou now knowest not whether thou have repentance, or faith, or love, or joy; why, be more in the acting of these, and thou wilt easily know it. Draw forth an object for godly sorrow, or faith, or love, or joy, and lay thy heart flat unto it, and take pains to provoke it into suitable action, and then see whether thou have these graces or not. As Dr. Sibbs observeth,¹ "There is sometimes grief for sin in us when we think there is none." It wants but stirring up by some quickening word: the like he saith of love, and it may be said of every other grace. You may go seeking for the hare or part-ridge many hours, and never find them while they lie close and stir not; but when once the hare betakes himself to his legs, and the bird to her wings, then you see them presently. So long as a Christian hath his graces in lively action, so long, for the most part, he is assured of them. How can you doubt whether you love God in the act of loving, or whether you believe in the very act of believing! If, therefore, you would be assured whether this sacred fire be kindled in your hearts, blow it up; get it into a flame, and then you will know: believe till you feel that you do believe, and love till you feel that you love.

3. The acting of the soul upon such excellent objects, doth naturally bring consolation with it.^m The very act of loving

¹ See Dr. Sibbs' 'Soul's Conflict,' pp. 480, 481.

^m Men experimentally feel that comfort in doing that which belongs unto them, which before they longed for, and went without.—*Dr. Sibbs' Soul's Conflict.*

God in Christ, doth bring inexpressible sweetness with it into the soul. The soul that is best furnished with grace, when it is not in action, is like a lute well stringed and tuned, which while it lieth still doth make no more music than a common piece of wood ; but when it is taken up and handled by a skilful lutist, the melody is most delightful. "Some degree of comfort," saith that comfortable doctor, "follows every good action, as heat accompanies fire, and as beams and influence issue from the sun ;" ⁿ which is so true, ^o that very heathens upon the discharge of a good conscience have found comfort and peace answerable : this is *præmium ante præmium*, a reward before the reward.^p

As a man, therefore, that is cold, should not stand still and say, I am so cold that I have no mind to labour,' but labour till his coldness be gone, and heat excited ; so he that wants assurance of the truth of his grace, and the comfort of assurance, must not stand still and say, 'I am so doubtful and uncomfortable that I have no mind to duty,' but ply his duty, and exercise his graces, till he find his doubts and discomforts to vanish.

Sect. X. Lastly : Another ordinary nurse of doubtings and discomfort, is the prevailing of melancholy in the body, whereby the brain is continually troubled and darkened, the fancy hindered, and reason perverted by the distempering of its instruments, and the soul is still clad in mourning weeds.^q It is no more wonder for a conscientious man that is overcome with melancholy to doubt, and fear, and despair, than it is for a sick man to groan, or a child to cry when he is beaten. This is the case with most that I have known lie long in doubting and distress of spirit. With some, their melancholy being raised by crosses or distemper of body, or some other occasion, doth afterwards bring in trouble of conscience as its companion. With others,^r trouble

ⁿ Preface to 'Soul's Conflict.'

^o Pro voluptatibus, et pro illis quæ parva et fragilia sunt, et in ipsis flagitiis noxia, ingens gaudium subit, inconcussum, et æquabile ; tum pax et concordia animi, et magnitudo cum mansuetudine. Omnis enim ex imbecillitate feritas est.—*Senec. de Vit. Beat.* c. 3.

^p Perhaps you think that the only comfort you can have, is by receiving some benefit, some mercy from God ; you are much mistaken. The comfort of letting your hearts out to God, is a greater comfort than any comfort you have in receiving any thing from God.—*Mr. Burroughs on Hos. ii. 19.* p. 606.

^q Non est mirum si timent melancholici, quia causam timoris continuo secum portant ; anima enim est involuta cum caligine tenebrosa, et quia anima sequitur corporis passiones seu complexionones, ideo timent, &c.—*Galen. in fine quartæ part. de Morbo.*

^r Timor et pusillanimitas si multum tempus habuerint, melancholicum faciunt.—*Hippocr.*

of mind is their first trouble, which long hanging on them, at last doth bring the body also into a melancholy habit: and then trouble increaseth melancholy, and melancholy again increaseth trouble, and so round. This is a most sad and pitiful state. For as the disease of the body is chronical and obstinate, and physic doth seldom succeed, where it hath far prevailed; so without the physician, the labours of the divine are usually in vain. You may silence them, but you cannot comfort them; you may make them confess that they have some grace, and yet cannot bring them to the comfortable conclusions. Or if you convince them of some work of the Spirit upon their souls, and a little at present abate their sadness, yet as soon as they are gone home, and look again upon their souls through this perturbing humour, all your convincing arguments are forgotten, and they are as far from comfort as ever they were. All the good thoughts of their state which you can possibly help them to, are seldom above a day or two old. As a man that looks through a black, or blue, or red glass, doth think things which he sees, to be of the same colour; and if you would persuade him to the contrary he will not believe you, but wonder that you should offer to persuade him against his eye-sight; so a melancholy man sees all things in a sad and fearful plight, because his reason looketh on them through his black humour, with which his brain is darkened and distempered. And as a man's eyes which can see all things about him, yet cannot see any imperfection in themselves; so it is almost impossible to make many of these men to know that they are melancholy. But as those who are troubled with the ephialtes do cry out of some body that lieth heavy upon them, when the disease is in their own blood and humours; so these poor men cry out of sin and the wrath of God, when the main cause is in this bodily distemper. The chief part of the cure of these men must be upon the body, because there is the chief part of the disease.

And thus I have showed you the chief causes, why so many Christians do enjoy so little assurance and consolation.

CHAP. IX.

Containing an Exhortation, and motives to Examine.

SECT. I. Having thus discovered the impediments to examination, I would presently proceed to direct you to the perfor-

mance of it, but that I am yet jealous whether I have fully prevailed with your wills, and whether you are indeed resolved to set upon the duty. I have found by long experience, as well as from Scripture, that the main difficulty lieth in bringing men to be willing, and to set themselves in good earnest to the searching of their hearts.

Many love to hear and read of marks and signs by which they may try ; but few will be brought to spend an hour in using them when they have them. They think they should have their doubts resolved as soon as they do but hear a minister name some of their signs ; and if that would do the work, then assurance would be more common ; but when they are informed that the work lies most upon their own hands, and what pains it must cost them to search their hearts faithfully, then they give up and will go no further.

This is not only the case of the ungodly, who commonly perish through this neglect ; but multitudes of the godly themselves are like idle beggars, who will rather make a practice of begging and bewailing their misery, than they will set themselves to labour painfully for their relief ; so do many spend days and years in sad complaints and doubtings, that will not be brought to spend a few hours in examination. I entreat all these persons, what condition soever they are of, to consider the weight of these following arguments, which I have propounded, in hope to persuade them to this duty.

Sect. II. 1. To be deceived about your title to heaven is exceeding easy ; and not to be deceived, is exceeding difficult. This I make manifest to you thus :

1. Multitudes that never suspected any falsehood in their hearts, have yet proved unsound in the day of trial ; and they that never feared any danger toward them, have perished for ever ; yea many that have been confident of their integrity and safety. I shall adjoin the proofs of what I say in the margin, for brevity sake.* How many poor souls are now in hell, that little thought of coming thither ! and that were wont to despise their counsel that bid them try and make sure ! and to say, they made no doubt of their salvation !

2. Yea, and many that have excelled in worldly wisdom, yet

* Matt. vii. 22, 26, 27, &c. ; Prov. xiv. 12 ; Luke xiii. 25, 26, xviii. 11, 21 ; Rev. iii. 17. So Ananias and Sapphira, the rich man in Luke xvi. &c. Abiathophel, Gehazi, Ananias and Sapphira, Pharisees, Jesuits, &c. Rom. i. 22. Judas and the Jews that heard Christ. Matt. vii. 22 ; Rom. ii. 21 ; 1 Cor. ix. 27.

have been befooled in this great business; and they that had wit to deceive their neighbours, were yet deceived by Satan and their own hearts. Yea, men of strongest head-pieces, and profoundest learning, who knew much of the secrets of nature, of the courses of the planets, and motions of the spheres, have yet been utterly mistaken in their own hearts.

3. Yea, those that have lived in the clear light of the Gospel, and heard the difference between the righteous and the wicked plainly laid open, and many a mark for trial laid down, and many a sermon pressing them to examine, and directing them how to do it, yet even these have been, and daily are, deceived.

4. Yea, those that have had a whole lifetime to make sure in, and have been told over and over, that they had their lives for no other end but to provide for everlasting rest, and make sure of it, have yet been deceived, and have wasted that lifetime in forgetful security.

5. Yea, those that have preached against the negligence of others, and pressed them to try themselves, and showed them the danger of being mistaken, have yet proved mistaken themselves.[†]

And is it not then time for us to rifle our hearts, and search them to the very quick?

Sect. III. 2. To be mistaken in this great point is also very common, as well as easy; so common that it is the case of most in the world. (Gal. vi. 3, 4, 7; Matt. vii. 21.) In the old world we find none that were in any fear of judgment; and yet how few persons were not deceived! So in Sodom; so among the Jews; and I would it were not so in England! Almost all men amongst us do verily look to be saved. You shall scarce speak with one of a thousand that doth not; and yet Christ telleth us, "that few find the strait gate and narrow way that leads to life." Do but reckon up the several sorts of men that are mistaken in thinking they have title to heaven, as the Scripture doth enumerate them, and what a multitude will they prove! 1. All that are ignorant of the fundamentals of religion. 2. All heretics who maintain false doctrines against the foundation, or against the necessary means of life. 3. All that live in the practice of gross sin. 4. Or that love and regard the smallest

[†] Omnium pene aliorum peccatorum conscii sunt sibi ipsis, qui iisdem sunt obnoxii: solam hypocrisin raro, et non nisi exquisitissimo instituto examine deprehendunt qui eadem sunt inebriati.—*Rupertus, Meldenius, Parænes, Votiv. pro pace Eccl.* fol. B. 2, 3. Loquitur ad verbi ministros.

sin. 5. All that harden themselves against frequent reproof (Prov. xxix. 1.) 6. All that mind the flesh more than the spirit, (Rom. viii. 6, 7, 13,) or the world more than God. (Phil. iii. 18, 19; 1 John ii. 15, 16.) 7. All that do as the most do. (Luke xiii. 24—26; 1 John v. 19.) 8. All that are deriders at the godly, and discourage others from the way of God by their reproaches. (Prov. i. 22, &c., iii. 34, and xix. 29.) 9. All that are unholy; and that never were regenerate and born anew. 10. All that have not their very hearts set upon heaven. (Matt. vi. 21.) 11. All that have a form of godliness without the power. 12. And all that love either parents, or wife, or children, or house, or lands, or life, more than Christ. (Luke xiv. 26.) Every one of these that thinketh he hath any title to heaven, is as surely mistaken as the Scripture is true.^a

And if such multitudes are deceived, should not we search the more diligently, lest we should be deceived as well as they?

Sect IV. 3. Nothing more dangerous than to be thus mistaken. The consequents of it are lamentable and desperate. If the godly be mistaken in judging their state to be worse than it is, the consequents of this mistake will be very sad; but if the ungodly be mistaken, the danger and mischief that followeth is unspeakable.

1. It will exceedingly confirm them in the service of Satan, and fasten them in their present way of death. They will never seek to be recovered, as long as they think their present state will serve. As the prophet saith, "A deceived heart will turn them aside, that they cannot deliver their own soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?" (Isa. xlv. 20.)

2. It will take away the efficacy of means that should do them good; nay, it will turn the best means to their hardening and ruin. If a man mistake his bodily disease, and think it to be clean contrary to what it is, will he not apply contrary remedies which will increase it? So when a Christian should apply the promises, his mistake will cause him to apply the threatenings; and when an ungodly man should apply the threatenings and terrors of the Lord, this mistake of his state will make him apply the promises; and there is no greater strengthener of sin, and destroyer of the soul, than Scripture misapplied. Worldly

^a Ephes. iv. 18; Hos. iv. 6; Isaiah xxvii. 11; 2 Cor. iv. 3; Rev. ii. 6, 20; Titus ii. 10; 1 Cor. vi. 9, and xv. 50; Ephes. v. 4—6; Psalm lxvi. 18; James iv. 4, 5; Heb. xii. 14; John iii. 3; 2 Tim. iii. 5; James i. 22; Mark xiii. 5, 6; Matt. x. 37; John xii. 25.

delights, and the deceiving words of sinners, may harden men most desperately in an unsafe way; but Scripture misapplied will do it far more effectually and dangerously.

3. It will keep a man from compassionating his own soul; though he be a sad object of pity to every understanding man that beholdeth him, yet will he not be able to pity himself, because he knoweth not his own misery. As I have seen a physician lament the case of his patient, when he hath discerned his certain death in some small beginning, when the patient himself feared nothing, because he knew not the mortal nature of his disease; so doth many a minister, or godly Christian, lament the case of a carnal wretch, who is so far from lamenting it himself, that he scorns their pity, and biddeth them be sorry for themselves, they shall not answer for him; and taketh them for his enemies, because they tell him the truth of his danger. (Acts vii. 54, xxii. 21.) As a man that seeth a beast going to the slaughter, doth pity the poor creature, when it cannot pity itself, because it little thinketh that death is so near: so is it with these poor sinners; and all long of this mistaking their spiritual state. Is it not a pitiful sight to see a man laughing himself, when his understanding friends stand weeping for his misery? Paul mentioneth the voluptuous men of his time, and the worldlings, with weeping; (Phil. iii. 17, 18;) but we never read of their weeping for themselves. Christ standeth weeping over Jerusalem, when they knew not of any evil that was towards them; (Luke xix. ;) nor give him thanks for his pity or his tears.

4. It is a case of greatest moment, and therefore mistaking must needs be most dangerous. If it were in making an ill bargain, yet we might repair our loss in the next. Scipio was wont to say, "It was an unseemly, absurd thing in military cases to say, 'I had not thought;' or, 'I was not aware.'"^h The matter being of so great concernment, every danger should be thought of, that you may be aware. Sure, in this weighty case, where our everlasting salvation or damnation is in question, and to be determined, every mistake is insufferable and inexcusable which might have been prevented by any cost or pains! Therefore men will choose the most able lawyers and physicians, because the mistakes of one may lose them their estate, and the mistakes of the other may lose them their lives: but mistakes about their souls are of a higher nature.

^h Turpe est in re militari dicere, Non putarem.

5. If you should continue your mistakes till death, there will be no time after to correct them for your recovery. Mistake now, and you are ruined for ever. Men think, to see a man die quietly or comfortably, is to see him die happily; but if his comfort proceed from this mistake of his condition, it is the most unhappy case and pitiful sight in the world. To live mistaken, in such a case, is lamentable; but, to die mistaken, is desperate.

Seeing then that the case is so dangerous, what wise man would not follow the search of his heart, both night and day, till he were assured of his safety?

Sect. V. 4. Consider how small the labour of this duty is, in comparison of the sorrow which followeth its neglect. A few hours' or days' work, if it be closely followed, and with good direction, may do much to resolve the question. There is no such trouble in searching our hearts, nor any such danger as may deter men from it. What harm can it do to you to try or to know? It will take no very long time, or if it did, yet you have your time given you for that end. One hour so spent, will comfort you more than many otherwise. If you cannot have while to make sure of heaven, how can you have while to eat, or drink, or live? You can endure to follow your callings at plough, and cart, and shop; to toil and sweat from day to day, and year to year, in the hardest labours: and cannot you endure to spend a little time in inquiring what shall be your everlasting state? What a deal of sorrow and after-complaining might this small labour prevent! How many miles' travel, besides the vexation, may a traveller save by inquiring of the way! Why, what a sad case are you in, while you live in such uncertainty! You can have no true comfort in any thing you see, or hear, or possess; you are not sure to be an hour out of hell, and if you come thither, you will do nothing but bewail the folly of this neglect: no excuse will then pervert justice, or quiet your conscience. If you say, 'I little thought of this day and place;' God and conscience may reply, 'Why didst thou not think of it? Wast thou not warned? Hadst thou not time? Therefore must thou perish, because thou wouldst not think of it.' As the commander answered his soldier, in Plutarch, when he said, "*Non volens erravi*," "I erred against my will;" he beat him, and replied, "*Non volens pœnas dato*," "Thou shalt be punished also against thy will."

Sect. VI. 5. Thou canst scarce do Satan a greater pleasure,

nor thyself a greater injury. It is the main scope of the devil, in all his temptations, to deceive thee, and keep thee ignorant of thy danger till thou feel the everlasting flames upon thy soul; and wilt thou join with him to deceive thyself? If it were not by this deceiving thee, he could not destroy thee: and if thou do this for him, thou dost the greatest part of his work, and art the chief destroyer and devil to thyself. And hath he deserved so well of thee, and thyself so ill, that thou shouldst assist him in such a design as thy damnation? To deceive another is a grievous sin, and such as perhaps thou wouldst scorn to be charged with: and yet thou thinkest it nothing to deceive thyself. Saith Solomon, "As a madman who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death, so is the man that deceiveth his neighbour, and saith, Am not I in sport?" (Prov. xxvi. 18, 19.) Surely, then, he that maketh but a sport, or a matter of nothing, to deceive his own soul, may well be thought a madman, casting firebrands and death at himself. "If any man think himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself," saith Paul. (Gal. vi. 3.) Certainly, among all the multitudes that perish, this is the commonest cause of their undoing, that they would not be brought to try their state in time. And is it not pity to think that so many thousands are merrily travelling to destruction, and do not know it, and all for want of this diligent search?

Sect. VII. 6. The time is near when God will search you, and that will be another kind of trial than this. If it be but in this life, by the fiery trial of affliction, it will make you wish again and again that you had spared God that work, and yourselves the sorrow; and that you had tried and judged yourselves, that so you might have escaped the trial and judgment of God.⁷ (1 Cor. xi. 30, 31.) He will examine you, then, as officers do offenders, with a word and a blow: and as they would have done by Paul, examine him by scourging. (Acts xxii. 24.) It was a terrible voice to Adam, when God called to him, "Adam, where art thou? Hast thou eaten," &c.? And to Cain, when God asked him, "Where is thy brother?" To have demanded this of himself had been easier. Men think God mindeth their

⁷ Quid profuerit reo, si sociis et circumstantibus suam innocentiam probaverit, cum eum judex criminis convictum teneat? Quamobrem nos semper ad Christi tribunal sistamus; ea nos probemus, et operam demus ut nos ipsos pertentemus penitus, ne ut aliis, sic nobis imponamus.—*Cart. Harmon.* vol. ii. p. 231.

state and ways no more than they do their own. "They consider not in their hearts" (saith the Lord) "that I remember all their wickedness; now their own doings have beset them about, they are before my face." (Hos. vii. 2.) Oh, what a happy preparation would it be to that last and great trial, if men had but thoroughly tried themselves, and made sure work beforehand! When a man doth but soberly and believingly think of that day, especially when he shall see the judgment-seat, what a joyful preparation is it, if he can truly say, 'I know the sentence shall pass on my side: I have examined myself by the same law of Christ which now must judge me, and I have found that I am quit from all my guilt, and am a justified person in law already.' Oh, sirs, if you knew but the comfort of such a preparation, you would fall close to the work of self-examining yet before you slept!

7. Lastly, I desire thee to consider what would be the sweet effects of this examining. If thou be upright and godly, it will lead thee straight towards assurance of God's love. If thou be not, though it will trouble thee at the present, yet doth it tend to thy happiness, and will lead thee to assurance of that happiness.

1. The very knowledge itself is naturally desirable. Every man would fain know things to come, especially concerning themselves. If there were a book written which would tell every man his destiny, what shall befall him to his last breath, how desirous would people be to procure it and read it? How did Nebuchadnezzar's thoughts run on things that after should come to pass, and he worshipped Daniel, and offered oblations to him, because he foretold them! When Christ had told his disciples "that one of them should betray him," how desirous are they to know who it was, though it were a matter of sorrow! How busily do they inquire when Christ's predictions should come to pass, and what were the signs of his coming! With what gladness doth the Samaritan woman run into the city, saying, 'Come and see a man that hath told me all that ever I did,' though he told her of her faults! When Ahaziah lay sick, how desirous was he to know whether he should live or die! Daniel is called a man greatly beloved, therefore God would reveal to him things that long after must come to pass.² And is it so desirable a thing to hear prophecies, and to know what

² Dan. ii. 29, 46, 47; Matt. xxvi.; Ibid. xxiv; John iv. 29; 2 Kings i. 2; Dan. ix. 23, and x. 11, 19.

shall befall us hereafter? And is it not then most especially to know what shall befall our souls; and what place and state we must be in for ever? Why, this you may know, if you will but faithfully try.

2. But the comforts of that certainty of salvation, which this trial doth conduce toward, are yet for greater. If ever God bestow this blessing of assurance on thee, thou wilt account thyself the happiest man on earth, and feel that it is not a notional or empty mercy. For,

1. What sweet thoughts wilt thou have of God! All that greatness, and jealousy, and justice, which is the terror of others, will be matter of encouragement and joy to thee. As the son of a king doth rejoice in his father's magnificence and power, which is the awe of subjects, and terror of rebels; when the thunder doth roar, and the lightning flash, and the earth quake, and the signs of dreadful omnipotency do appear, thou canst say, 'All this is the effect of my Father's power.'

2. How sweet may every thought of Christ, and the blood which he hath shed, and the benefits he hath procured, be unto thee who hast got this assurance! Then will the name of a Saviour be a sweet name; and the thoughts of his gentle and loving nature, and of the gracious design which he hath carried on for our salvation, will be pleasing thoughts. Then will it do thee good to view his wounds by the eye of faith, and to put thy fingers, as it were, into his side; when thou canst call him, as Thomas did, "My Lord and my God."

3. Every passage, also, in the word will then afford thee comfort. How sweet will be the promises when thou art sure they are thy own! The Gospel will then be glad tidings indeed. The very threatenings will occasion thy comfort, to remember that thou hast escaped them. Then wilt thou cry, with David, "O how I love thy law! it is sweeter than honey, more precious than gold," &c.; and with Luther, that thou wilt "not take all the world for one leaf of the Bible." When thou wast in thy sin, this book was to thee as Micaiah to Ahab, "It never spoke good of thee, but evil;" and therefore, no wonder if then thou didst hate it; but now it is the charter of thy everlasting rest, how welcome will it be to thee; and, how beautiful the very feet of those that bring it! (Rom. x. 15.)

4. What boldness and comfort then mayst thou have in prayer, when thou canst say "Our Father" in full assurance; and knowest that thou art welcome and accepted through Christ;

and that thou hast a promise to be heard whenever thou askest; and knowest that God is readier to grant thy requests than thou to move them ! With what comfortable boldness mayest thou then approach the throne of grace ; (Heb. x. 22, 29 ;) especially when the case is weighty, and thy necessity great ! This assurance in prayer will be a sweet privilege indeed. A despairing soul, that feeleth the weight of sin and wrath, especially at a dying hour, would give a large price to be a partaker of this privilege, and to be sure that he might have pardon and life for the asking for.

5. This assurance will give the sacrament a sweet relish to thy soul, and make it a refreshing feast indeed.

6. It will multiply the sweetness of every mercy thou receivest. When thou art sure that all proceeds from love, and are the beginnings and earnest of everlasting mercies. Thou wilt then have more comfort in a morsel of bread than the world hath in the greatest abundance of all things.

7. How comfortably then mayest thou undergo all afflictions, when thou knowest that he meaneth thee no hurt in them, but hath promised, "that all shall work together for thy good;" when thou art sure that he chasteneth thee because he loveth thee, and scourgeth thee, because thou art a son whom he will receive, and that out of very faithfulness he doth afflict thee ! (Rom. viii. 28 ; Heb. xii. 6, 7 ; Psal. lxxv.) What a support must this be to thy heart ; and how will it abate the bitterness of the cup ! Even the Son of God himself doth seem to take comfort from this assurance, when he was, in a manner, forsaken for our sins, and therefore he cries out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" And even the prodigal, under his guilt and misery, doth take some comfort in remembering that he hath a father.

8. This assurance will sweeten to thee the forethoughts of death, and make thy heart glad to forethink of that entrance into joy ; (Num. xxiii. 10 ;) when a man that is uncertain whither he is going must needs die in horror.^a

9. It will sweeten also thy forethoughts of judgment, when thou art sure that it will be the day of thy absolution and coronation.

10. Yea, the very thoughts of the flames of hell, will admi-

^a It is a terrible thing for the stoutest heart alive to look such a danger in the face, as, for aught he knows, may at one blow kill him, and damn him ; or in a moment send him both to his grave and to hell.—*Mr. Vines' Sermon on Numb. xiv. 24.* p. 9.

nister matter of consolation to thee, when thou canst certainly conclude thou art saved from them.

11. The forethoughts of heaven also will be more incomparably delightful, when thou art certain that it is the place of thine everlasting abode.

12. It will make thee exceedingly lively and strong in the work of the Lord. With what courage wilt thou run when thou knowest thou shalt have the prize; and fight, when thou knowest thou shalt conquer! It will make thee always abound in the work of the Lord, when thou knowest that thy labour is not in vain. (1 Cor. xv. 58.)

13. It will also make thee more profitable to others. Thou wilt be a most cheerful encourager of them from thine own experience; thou wilt be able to refresh the weary, and to strengthen the weak, and to speak a word of comfort in season to a troubled soul; whereas now, without assurance, instead of comforting others, thou wilt rather have need of support thyself: so that others are losers by thy uncertainty as well as thyself.

14. Assurance will put life into all thy affections or graces. 1. It will help thee to repent, and melt over thy sins, when thou knowest how dearly God did love thee, whom thou hast abused. 2. It will inflame thy soul with love to God, when thou once knowest thy near relation to him, and how tenderly he is affected toward thee. (Psal. cxvi. 1, and xviii. 1, 2.) 3. It will quicken thy desires after him, when thou art once sure of thy interest in him. (1 Thess. iv. 17, 18; Psal. cxviii. 28; Isai. xxv. 1.) 4. It is the most excellent fountain of continual rejoicing. (Hab. iii. 17—19.) 5. It will confirm thy trust and confidence in God in the greatest straits. (Psal. lxxxix. 26, and xli. 1—3, &c.) 6. It will fill thy heart with thankfulness. 7. It will raise thee in the high, delightful work of praise. 8. It will be the most excellent help to a heavenly mind. 9. It will exceedingly tend to thy perseverance in all this. He that is sure of the crown will hold on to the end, when others will be tired, and give up through discouragement.

All these sweet effects of assurance would make thy life a kind of heaven on earth. Seeing, then, that the examining of our state is the way to this assurance, and the means without which God doth not usually bestow it, doth it not concern us to fall close to this searching work?

Sect. IX. I would not have bestowed this time and labour in

urging you with all these foregoing considerations, but that I know how backward man is to this duty. And though I am certain that these motives have weight of reason in them, yet experience of men's unreasonableness in things of this nature, doth make me jealous lest you should lay by the book, when you have read all this, as if you had done, and never set yourselves to the practice of the duty. Reader, thou seest the case in hand is of the greatest moment. It is to know whether thou shalt everlastingly live in heaven or hell. If thou hast lived hitherto in dark uncertainty, it is a pitiful case; but if thou wilfully continue so, thy madness is inexpressible: and is it not wilfully, when a thorough trial might help thee to be resolved, and thou wilt not be persuaded to be at so much pains? What sayest thou now? Art thou fully resolved to fall upon the work? Shall all this labour that I have bestowed in persuading thee, be lost, or no? If thou wilt not obey, I would thou hadst never read these lines, that they might not have aggravated thy guilt, and silenced thee in judgment. I here put this special request to thee in behalf of thy soul; nay, I lay this charge upon thee in the name of the Lord; that thou defer no longer, but take the next opportunity that thou canst have, and take thy heart to task in good earnest, and think with thyself, 'Is it so easy, so common, and so dangerous, to be mistaken? Are there so many wrong ways? Is the heart so guileful? Why then do I not search into every corner, and ply this work till I know my state? Must I so shortly undergo the trial at the bar of Christ? And do I not presently fall on trying myself? Why, what a case were I in, if I should then miscarry! May I know by a little diligent inquiry now, and do I stick at the labour?' And here set thyself to the duty. Object. But it may be, thou wilt say, I know not how to do it. Answ. That is the next work that I come to, to give directions herein; but, alas! it will be in vain if thou be not resolved to practise them. Wilt thou, therefore, before thou goest any further, here promise before the Lord, to set thyself, to thy power, upon the speedy performing of the duty, according to these directions, which I shall lay down from the word? I demand nothing unreasonable or impossible of thee: it is but that thou wouldest presently bestow a few hours' time, to know what shall become of thee for ever. If a neighbour, or common friend, desires but an hour's time of thee, in conference, or in labour, or any thing that thou mayst help them in, thou wouldest not, sure, deny it. How much less shouldst thou deny

this to thyself in so great a case? I pray thee take this request from me, as if upon my knees, in the name of Christ, I did prefer it to thee; and I will betake me upon my knees to Christ again, to beg that he will persuade thy heart to the duty: and, in hope that thou wilt practise them, I will here give thee some directions.^b

CHAP. X.

Containing Directions for Examination, and some Marks for Trial.

SECT. I. I will not stand here to lay down the directions necessary for preparation to this duty, because you may gather them from what is said concerning the hinderances: for the contraries of those hinderances will be most necessary helps. Only before you set upon it, I advise you moreover to the observation of these rules. 1. Come not with too peremptory conclusions of yourselves beforehand. Do not judge too confidently before you try. Many godly, dejected souls come with this

^b I cannot but English (though I mar it) one passage in Seneca, to show some Christians, to their shame, what heathens did: "The soul is daily to be called to an account. It was the custom of Sextius, that when the day was past, and he betook himself to his rest at night, he would ask his soul, 'What evil of thine hast thou healed to-day? What vice hast thou resisted? In what part art thou better?' Anger will cease and become more moderate, when it knows it must every day come before the judge. What practice is more excellent than thus to sift or examine over the whole day? How quiet, and sound, and sweet a sleep must needs follow this reckoning with ourselves; when the soul is either commended or admonished, and, as a secret observer and judge of itself, is acquainted with his own manners! I use this power myself, and daily accuse myself, or plead my cause before myself. When the candle is taken out of my sight, and my wife holds her tongue, then, according to my custom, I search over the whole day with myself; I measure over again my doings and my sayings; I hide nothing from myself; I pass over nothing; for why should I fear any of my errors, when I can say, 'See that thou do so no more; I now forgive thee; in such a disputation thou spakest too contentiously; engage not hereafter in disputes with them that are ignorant. They that have not learned will not learn. Such a man thou didst admonish more freely than thou oughtest; and therefore didst not amend him, but offend him. Hereafter see, not only whether it be truth which thou speakest, but whether he to whom it is spoken can bear the truth.'"—*Senec. de Ira*, lib. iii. c. 36. If an heathen can keep a daily reckoning with his soul, methinks a Christian might follow on the work of examination once till he know his condition; and when that is done, he shall find this daily reckoning well managed, to be of inconceivable advantage, for subduing corruption, and for growth in grace.

prejudging to the work, concluding certainly that their state is miserable before they have tried it : and most wicked men, on the contrary side, do conclude most confidently that their state is good, or tolerable at the least ; no wonder if these both miscarry in judging, when they pass the sentence before the trial.

2. Be sure to be so well acquainted with the Scripture, as to know what is the tenor of the covenant of grace, and what are the conditions of justification and glorification, and consequently what are sound marks to try thyself by, and wherein the truth of grace, and essence of Christianity, do both consist,

3. And it will not be unuseful to write out some of the chief, and those scriptures withal which hold them forth, and so to bring this paper with you when you come to examination.

4. Be a constant observer of the temper and motions of thy heart ; almost all the difficulty of the work doth lie in the true and clear discerning of it. Be watchful in observing the actings both of grace and corruption, and the circumstances of their actings ; as how frequent ; how violent ; how strong or weak were the outward incitements ; how great or small the impediments ; what delight, or loathing, or fear, or reluctancy, did go with those acts ! By these, and the like observations, you may come to a more infallible knowledge of yourselves.

5. Be sure you set upon the work with a serious, roused, awakened soul, apprehensive of how great concernment it is.

6. And lastly : Resolve to judge thyself impartially, neither better nor worse than thou art, but as the evidence shall prove thee.

Being thus provided, then set to the business, and therein observe these directions following, which I will mention briefly, that lying close together, you may be able to view and observe them the more easily :

1. Empty thy mind of all thy other cares and thoughts, that they do not distract or divide thy mind. This work will be enough at once of itself, without joining others with it.

2. Then fall down before God, and in hearty prayer desire the assistance of his Spirit, to discover to thee the plain truth of thy condition, and to enlighten thee in the whole progress of the work.

3. Make choice of the most convenient time and place. I shall not stand upon the particular directions about these, because I shall mention them more largely when I come to direct you in

the duty of contemplation : only this in brief: 1. Let the place be the most private, that you may be free from distractions. 2. For the time thus, 1. When you are most solitary, and at leisure ; you cannot cast accounts, especially of such a nature as these, either in a crowd of company, or of employment. 2. Let it be a set and chosen time, when you have nothing to hinder you. 3. But if it may be, let it be the present time, especially if thou hast been a stranger hitherto to the work ; there is no delaying in matters of such weight. 4. Especially when you have a more special call to search yourselves : as in public calamities, in time of sickness, before a sacrament, &c. 5. When God is trying you by some affliction, and, as Job saith, is searching after your sin, then set in with him, and search after them yourselves. (Job x. 6.) 6. Lastly : You should specially take such a time when you are most fit for the work. When you are not secure and stupid on the one hand, nor yet under deep desertions or melancholy on the other hand, for else you will be unfit judges of your own state.

4. When you have thus chosen the fittest time and place, then draw forth, either from thy memory, or in writing, the forementioned marks, or Gospel conditions, or descriptions of the saints. Try them by Scripture, and convince thy soul thoroughly of their infallible truth.

5. Proceed, then, to put the question to thyself, but be sure to state it right. Let it not be whether there be any good in thee at all, for so thou wilt err on the one hand ; nor yet whether thou have such or such a degree and measure of grace, for so thou wilt err on the other hand, but whether such or such a saving grace be in thee at all in sincerity, or not ?

6. If thy heart draw back, and be loth to the work, suffer it not so to give thee the slip, but force it on ; lay thy command upon it ; let reason interpose, and use its authority ; look over the foregoing arguments, and press them home ; yea, lay the command of God upon it, and charge it to obey upon pain of his displeasure. Set conscience at work also. Let it do its office, till thy lazy heart be spurred up to the work ; for if thou suffer it to break away once and twice, &c., it will grow so headstrong, that thou canst not master it.

7. Let not thy heart trifle away the time, when it should be diligently at the work. Put the question to it seriously, Is it thus and thus with me, or not ? Force it here to an answer. Suffer it not to be silent, nor to jangle and think of other

matters. If the question be hard, through the darkness of thy heart, yet do not give it over so, but search the closer, and study the case the more exactly, and if it be possible, let not thy heart give over till it hath resolved the question, and told thee off or on, in what case thou art. Ask it strictly, as Joseph examined his brethren, (Gen. xliii. 7,) How it stands affected. Do as David, (Psal. lxxvii. 6,) "My spirit made diligent search." If thy heart strive to break away before thou art resolved, wrestle with it till thou hast prevailed, and say, 'I will not let thee go till thou hast answered.' He that can prevail with his own heart, shall also be a prevailer with God.

8. If thou find the work beyond thy strength, so that after all thy pains thou art never the more resolved, then seek out for help: go to some one that is godly, experienced, able, and faithful, and tell him thy case, and desire his best advice and help. Not that any man can know thy heart so well as thyself: but if thou deal faithfully, and tell him what thou knowest by thyself, he can tell thee whether they be sound evidence or not; and show thee Scripture how to prove them so; and direct thee in the right use of such evidences; and show thee how to conclude from them. Yea, when thou canst get no further, the very judgment of an able, godly man should take much with thee, as a probable argument: as the judgment of a physician, concerning the state of thy body. Though this can afford thee no full certainty, yet it may be a great help to stay and direct thee. But be sure thou do not make this a pretence to put off thy own duty of examining, but only use it as one of the last remedies, when thou findest thy own endeavours will not serve. Neither be thou forward to open thy case to every one, or to a carnal, flattering, and unskilful person; but to one that hath wisdom to conceal thy secrets, and tenderness to compassionate thee, and skill to direct thee, and faithfulness to deal truly and plainly with thee.

9. When by all this pains and means thou hast discovered the truth of thy state, then pass the sentence on thyself accordingly. A mere examination will do thee little good, if it proceed not to a judgment. Conclude as thou findest, either that thou art a true believer, or that thou art not. But pass not this sentence rashly, nor with self-flattery, nor from melancholy terrors and fears, but do it groundedly, and deliberately, and truly, as thou findest according to thy conscience. Do not conclude, as some do, 'I am a good Christian,' or as others do, 'I am a reprobate,

or an hypocrite, and shall be damned.' When thou hast no ground for what thou sayest but thy own fancy, or hopes, or fears, nay, when thou art convinced by Scripture and reason of the contrary, and hast nothing to say against the arguments; let not thy judgment be any way biassed or bribed, and so forestalled from sentencing aright.

10. Labour to get thy heart kindly affected with its discovered condition, according to the sentence passed on it. Do not think it enough to know; but labour to feel what God hath made thee see. If thou find thyself undoubtedly graceless, oh! get this to thy heart, and think what a doleful condition it is to be an enemy to God; to be unpardoned, unsanctified; and if thou shouldst so die, to be eternally damned! One would think such a thought should make a heart of stone to quake. On the contrary, if thou find thyself renewed and sanctified indeed, oh! get this warm and close to thy heart; bethink thyself what a blessed state the Lord hath brought thee into; to be his child, his friend; to be pardoned, justified, and sure to be saved! Why, what needest thou fear but sinning against him? Come war, or plague, or sickness, or death, thou art sure they can but thrust thee into heaven.

Thus follow these meditations, till they have left their impression on thy heart.

11. Be sure to record this sentence so passed; write it down, or at least write it in thy memory: at such a time, upon thorough examination, I found my state to be thus or thus: this record will be very useful to thee hereafter. If thou be ungodly, what a damp will it be to thy presumption and security, to go and read the sentence of thy misery under thy own hand! If thou be godly, what a help will it be against the next temptation to doubting and fear, to go and read under thy hand this record! Mayst thou not think, if at such a time I found the truth of grace, is it not likely to be now the same, and these my doubts to come from the enemy of my peace?

12. Yet would I not have thee so trust to one discovery, as to try no more, especially if thou have made any foul defection from Christ, and played the backslider; see, then, that thou renew the search again.

13. Neither would I have this hinder thee in the daily search of thy ways, or of thy increase in grace and fellowship with Christ. It is an ill sign, and a desperate vile sin, for a man, when he thinks he hath found himself gracious, and in a happy

state, to let down his watch, and grow negligent of his heart and ways, and scarce look after them any more.

14. Neither would I have thee give over in discouragement, if thou canst not at once, or twice, or ten times trying, discover thy case: but follow it on till thou hast discovered. If one hour's labour will not serve, take another; if one day, or month, or year, be too little, follow it still. If one minister cannot direct thee sufficiently, go to another. The issue will answer all thy pains. There is no sitting down discouraged in a work that must be done.

15. Lastly: Above all, take heed, if thou find thyself to be yet unregenerate, that thou do not conclude of thy future state by thy present; nor say, 'Because I am ungodly, I shall die so;' or, 'Because I am an hypocrite, I shall continue so:' no; thou hast another work to do; and that is, to resolve presently to cleave to Christ, and to break off thy hypocrisy and thy wickedness. If thou find that thou hast been all this while out of the way, do not sit down in despair; but make so much the more haste to turn into it: if thou hast been an hypocrite, or ungodly person, all thy life, yet is the promise offered thee by Christ; and he tendereth himself to be thy Lord and Saviour. Neither canst thou possibly be so willing to accept of him, as he is to accept thee. Nothing but thy own unwillingness can keep thy soul from Christ, though thou hast hitherto abused him, and dissembled with him.

Object. But if I have gone so far, and been a professor so long, and yet find myself an hypocrite now, after all, what hope is there that I should now become sincere? Answ. Dost thou heartily desire to be sincere; thy sincerity doth lie especially in thy will: as long as thou art unwilling, I confess, thy case is sad; but if thou be willing to receive Christ as he is offered to thee, and so to be a Christian indeed, then thou art sincere. Neither has Christ restrained his Spirit, or promises, to any set time; or said to thee, 'Thou shalt find grace, if thou but sin so much, or so long; but if thou be heartily willing at any time, I know not who can hinder thy happiness.' Yet is this no diminution of the sin or danger of delaying.

Thus I have given you these directions for examination, which conscionably practised, will be of singular advantage and use to discover your states; but it is not the bare reading of them that will do it. I fear, of many that will approve of this advice, there will but few be brought to use it; however, those that are

willing, may find help by it, and the rest will be left most inexcusable in judgment.

Sect. III. I will not digress further, to warn you here of the false rules and marks of trial which you must beware, having opened them to you more fully when I preached on that subject; but I will briefly adjoin some marks to try your title to this rest, by referring you, for a fuller discovery, to the description of the people of God, in the first part of this book: but be sure you search thoroughly, and deal plainly, or else you will but lose your labour, and deceive yourselves. (Mark i.)

1. Every soul that hath title to this rest, doth place his chiefest happiness in it, and make it the chief and ultimate end of his soul. This is the first mark; which is so plain a truth, that I need not stand to prove it: for this rest consisteth in the full and glorious enjoyment of God; and he that maketh not God his chief good, and ultimate end, is, in heart, a pagan, and vile idolater, and doth not take the Lord for his God truly.

Let me ask thee, then, Dost thou truly, in judgment and affection, account it thy chiefest happiness to enjoy the Lord in glory, or dost thou not? Canst thou say, with David, "The Lord is my portion;" (Psal. xvi. 5;) and, as Psal. lxxiii. 15, "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and whom in earth that I desire in comparison of thee?" If thou be an heir of rest, it is thus with thee. (Psal. cxix. 57, and cxlii. 5; Lam. iii. 4.) Though the flesh will be pleading for its own delights, and the world will be creeping into thine affection, and thou canst not be quite freed from the love of it, yet in thy ordinary, settled, prevailing judgment and affections, thou preferrest God before all things in the world.

1. Thou makest him the end of thy desires and endeavours.^c The very reason why thou hearest and prayest, why thou desirest to live and breathe on earth, is chiefly this; that thou mayst seek the Lord, and make sure of thy rest: thou seekest first the kingdom of God and its righteousness. Though thou do not seek it so desirously and zealously as thou shouldest, yet it hath the chief of thy desires and endeavours, and nothing else is desired or preferred against it; (Matt. vi. 33;) so that thy very heart is thus far set upon it. (Matt. vi. 21; Col. iii. 1—3.)

^c Aversio à Deo in peccando, est à Deo et tanquam à principio, et tanquam à fine, ut optimè.—*Gibieuf*, lib. ii. c. 20. s. 8. p. 427. Ideo conversio est ad Deum ut ad principium et ut ad finem.

2. Also thou wilt think no labour or suffering too great to obtain it ;^d and though the flesh may sometimes shrink, or draw back, yet art thou resolved and content to go through all.^e (Matt. vii. 13 ; 2 Tim. ii. 5, 12 ; Rom. viii. 17 ; Luke iv. 24, xiv. 26, 27.)

3. Also, if thou be an heir of rest, thy valuation of it will be so high, and thy affection to it so great, that thou wouldst not exchange thy title to it, and hopes of it, for any worldly good whatsoever. Indeed, when the soul is in doubts of enjoying it, perhaps it may possibly desire rather the continuance of an earthly happiness, than to depart out of the body with fears of going to hell. But if he were sure that heaven should be his own, he would desire to depart, and to be with Christ, as being the best state of all. And if God would set before him an eternity of earthly pleasure and contents on one hand, and the rest of the saints on the other hand, and bid him take his choice, he would refuse the world, and choose this rest. (Psal. xvi. 9, 10 ; Rom. viii. 23 ; 2 Cor. v. 2, 3 ; Phil. iii. 20.) Thus, if thou be a Christian indeed, thou takest God for thy chiefest good, and this rest for the most amiable and desirable state : and by the foresaid means thou mayst discover it.

But if thou be yet in the flesh, and an unsanctified wretch, then is it clean contrary with thee in all these respects. Then dost thou in thy heart prefer thy worldly happiness and fleshly delights before God ; and though thy tongue may say that God is the chief good, yet thy heart doth not so esteem him. For,

^d We renounced the world when we were baptised (in covenant and promise). But now we truly renounce the world (in practice and performance of the covenant) when being tried and proved by God, forsaking all that we have, we follow the Lord, and do stand fast and live in his belief and fear.—*Cypr. Epist. 7. ad Rogat. p. 20.*

^e The preferring God before all, and forsaking all in heart and resolution for him, is essential to our Christianity, and no man can be saved without it ; and therefore it was ever solemnly professed and promised in baptism in the primitive church, as you may see in *Cypr. Ep. 7. et 54 ; et lib. de Hab. Virg. Const. Apost. Clem. lib. iv. c. 4. Tertul. de Coron. Milit. : Aquam adituri, ibidem, sed et aliquanto prius in ecclesia, sub antistitis manu contestamur nos renunciare diabolo et pompæ et angelis ejus. Ita in lib. de Spectac. : Ex hoc causatur quæcunque pigritia vel delectatio creaturæ rationalis indebita ; quia si haberet amorem in Deum satis intensum, torporem illum excuteret, et perfectè amando Deum, sibi debite deserviret. Et cum peccatum quodcunque causatur in tepeditate dilectionis, patet quod incuria, h. e. parvi-pensio, vel non-curatio legis Dei, et peccatum quodcunque actuale, ad illam consequitur. Ubi quæso est major ingratitudo quam amorem terminare finaliter in creatura abjecta, et Deum quem debemus maxime omnes diligere, non diligere ?—*Wickliffe Trialog. lib. ii. c. 16. f. 71.**

1. The world is the chief end of thy desires and endeavours; thy very heart is set upon it; thy greatest care and labour is to maintain thy estate, or credit, or fleshly delights, but the life to come hath little of thy care or labour. Thou didst never perceive so much excellency in that unseen glory of another world, as to draw thy heart so after it, or set thee a labouring so heartily for it: but that little pains which thou bestowest that way, it is but in the second place, and not the first.^f God hath but the world's leavings, and that time and labour which thou canst spare from the world, or those few cold and careless thoughts which follow thy constant, earnest, and delightful thoughts of earthly things. Neither wouldest thou do any thing at all for heaven, if thou knewest how to keep the world: but lest thou shouldest be turned into hell, when thou canst keep the world no longer, therefore thou wilt do something.

2. Therefore it is that thou thinkest the way of God too strict, and wilt not be persuaded to the constant labour of conscientious walking according to the Gospel rule: and when it comes to trial, that thou must forsake Christ or thy worldly happiness, and the wind which was in thy back doth turn in thy face, then thou wilt venture heaven rather than earth, and, as desperate rebels used to say, thou wilt rather trust God's mercy for thy soul, than man's for thy body, and so wilfully deny thy obedience to God.

3. And certainly if God would but give thee leave to live in health and wealth for ever on earth, thou wouldst think it a better state than rest. Let them seek for heaven that would, thou wouldst think this thy chiefest happiness. This is thy case if thou be yet an unregenerate person, and hast no title to the saint's rest.

Sect. IV. The second mark which I shall give thee, to try whether thou be an heir of rest, is this: ^g as thou takest God for

^f In one word, the sum of all is this, if he do embrace Christ (and God in Christ) as Christ is offered him in the Gospel, and resigns himself to the regiment and government of Christ, and doth so esteem and prize him, that he counts all things as dung and dross in comparison of him, and can forsake father and mother, and all, to follow him; and can take up his cross, and undergo any affliction that shall be laid on him, rather than forsake and part with Christ; they that have thus brought him in their heart (to contract it in one word) to resign themselves to the government of the law of God, and set themselves in every thing to walk with him, and to approve themselves to him, have evidence that God hath brought them into covenant.—*D. Stoughton's Right-Man's Plea*, serm. v. p. 14.

^g Ut homines filii Dei fiant, filium Dei unicum per fidem recipiunt; et ipso

thy chief good, so thou dost heartily accept of Christ for thy only Saviour and Lord to bring thee to this rest. The former mark was the sum of the first and great command of the law of nature, "Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart," or above all. This second mark is the sum of the command or condition of the Gospel, which saith, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved." And the performance of these two is the whole sum or essence of godliness and Christianity. Observe, therefore, the parts of this mark, which is but a definition of faith.

1. Dost thou find that thou art naturally a lost, condemned man for thy breach of the first covenant? And dost believe that Jesus Christ is the mediator, who hath made a sufficient satisfaction to the law; and hearing in the Gospel that he is offered without exception unto all, dost heartily consent that he alone shall be thy Saviour; and dost no further trust to thy duties and works, than as conditions required by him, and means appointed in subordination to him, not looking at them as in the least measure able to satisfy the course of the law, or as a legal righteousness, nor any part of it, but art content to trust thy salvation on the redemption made by Christ?

2. Art thou also content to take him for thy only Lord and King,^h to govern and guide thee by his laws and Spirit? And to obey him even when he commandeth the hardest duties, and those which most cross the desires of the flesh? Is it thy sorrow when thou breakest thy resolution herein; and thy joy when thou keepest closest in obedience to him? And though the world and flesh do sometimes entice and overreach thee, yet is it thy ordinary desire and resolution to obey, so that thou wouldst not change thy Lord and Master for all the world? Thus it is with every true Christian. But if thou be an hypocrite, it is far otherwise. Thou mayest call Christ thy Lord and thy Saviour, but thou never foundest thyself so lost without him, as to drive thee to seek him, and trust him, and lay thy salvation on him alone. Or, at least, thou didst never heartily consent that he should govern thee as thy Lord;ⁱ nor didst resign up

donante, hanc accipiunt à Domino potestatem, ut et in eum credant, et ad numerum filiorum Dei pertineant.—*Fulgent. lib. de Incar. et Grat. c. 26.* Quid enim eramus quando Christum nondum elegeramus? Et ideo non diligebamus; nam qui eum non elegit, quomodo diligit?—*Aug. Tract. 86. in Johan.*

^h Christ, in the latter days, shall be fully honoured in his kingly power. Hitherto Christ hath been much honoured in his prophetic and priestly office, but not so much in his kingly, &c.—*Burroughs on Hos. p. 131.*

ⁱ Est enim fœderis obligatio mutua. Sed principium est à Deo.—*Paræ, in*

thy soul and life to be ruled by him; nor take his word for the law of thy thoughts and actions. It is like thou art content to be saved from hell by Christ when thou diest, but, in the mean time, he shall command thee no further than will stand with thy credit, or pleasure, or worldly estate and ends. And if he would give thee leave, thou hadst far rather live after the world and flesh, than after the word and Spirit. And though thou mayest now and then have a motion or purpose to the contrary, yet this that I have mentioned is the ordinary desire and choice of thy heart: and so thou art no true believer in Christ, for though thou confess him in words, yet in works thou dost deny him, being disobedient, and to every good work a disapprover and reprobate. (Tit. i. 17.) This is the case of those that shall be shut out of the saint's rest.

But especially I would here have you observe, that it is in all this the consent of your hearts, or wills, which I lay down in this mark to be inquired after; for that is the most essential act of justifying faith:^k therefore, I do not ask whether thou be assured of salvation; nor yet whether thou canst believe that thy sins are pardoned, and that thou art beloved of God in Christ. These are no parts of justifying faith, but excellent fruits and consequents, which they that do receive are comforted by them; but perhaps thou mayst never receive them while thou livest, and yet be a true heir of rest. Do not say, then, 'I cannot believe that my sin is pardoned, or that I am in God's favour, and therefore I am no true believer.' This is a most mistaking conclusion: the question is, whether thou canst heartily accept of Christ, that thou mayst be pardoned; reconciled to God, and so saved? Dost thou consent that he shall be thy Lord, who hath bought thee, and take his own course to bring thee to heaven? This is justifying, saving faith; and this is the mark that thou must try thyself by: yet, still observe, that all this

Gen. vi. 18. p. (mihi) 735. Sed integrum fœdus tum demum à Deo fuit constitutum quum utriusque intercessit sponsio inter partes contrahentes.—Juv. Orat. de Promis. et Fœdere.

^k Itaque velle credere est credere: non quia credere sit actus imperatus, sed quia in voluntate est; ut scribit Augustinus ad Marcell. de spirit. et liter. Etiam velle resipiscere est resipiscentiam agere: fundatur enim resipiscentia in ipsius voluntatis immutatione, quæ a malo convertitur ad bonum.—*D. Twiss Tileno contr. Corvium*, p. 355. a. Vide nunc utrum quisque credat si noluerit, aut non credat si voluerit? quod absurdum est: quid est enim credere nisi consentire verum esse quod dicitur? Consensio autem utique volentis est, profecto fides in voluntate est.—*Aug. Retract. lib. i. c. 31. Fides in potestate est, quoniam cum vult quisque credit, et cum credit volens credit.—Ibid. c. 32.*

consent must be hearty and real ; not feigned or with reservations.¹ It is not saying, as that dissembling son, Matt. xxi. 30, "I go, sir," when he went not ; to say, 'Christ shall be my Lord,' and yet let corruption ordinarily rule thee, or be unwilling that his commands should encroach upon the interest of the world or flesh. If any have more of the government of thee than Christ, ; or if thou hadst rather live after any other laws than his, if it were at thy choice, thou art not his disciple. Thus I have laid you down these two marks, which, I am sure, are such as every Christian hath, and no other but sincere Christians. I will add no more, seeing the substance of Christianity is contained in these. Oh that the Lord would now persuade thee to the close performance of this self-trying task ! that thou mayst not tremble with horror of soul, when the Judge of all the world shall try thee, but have thy evidence and assurance so ready at hand, and be so able to prove thy title to rest, that the thoughts and approaching of death and judgment may revive thy spirits, and fill thee with joy ; and not appal thee, and fill thee with amazement !

¹ Hereby you may know whether your conversion be right, yea or no : as that which is Christ's cometh to be thine, so that which is thine cometh again to be Christ's : "My beloved is mine, and I am his."—*Burroughs on Hos.* lect. 17, p. 601. Ut eligatur gratia, ipsa prius eligit ; neque suscipitur aut diligitur, nisi hoc ipsa in corde hominis operetur. Istam gratiam nullus hominum desiderare vel poscere, sed nec cognoscere poterit, nisi eam prius ab illo accipiat, qui eam nullis præcedentibus operibus bonis largitur, &c.—*Fulgen. de Verit. Prædest.* c. 15, 16. Even the Jesuits confess that it is ex Christi gratia non solum esse sanum, sed et sanari velle, et precari ut credere velimus et purgari.—*Dion. Petavius de Lege et Gratia*, lib. ii. c. 3. sect. 1, 2, &c. But they see not that ipsa sanitas consistit maxima ex parte in ipso velle.

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